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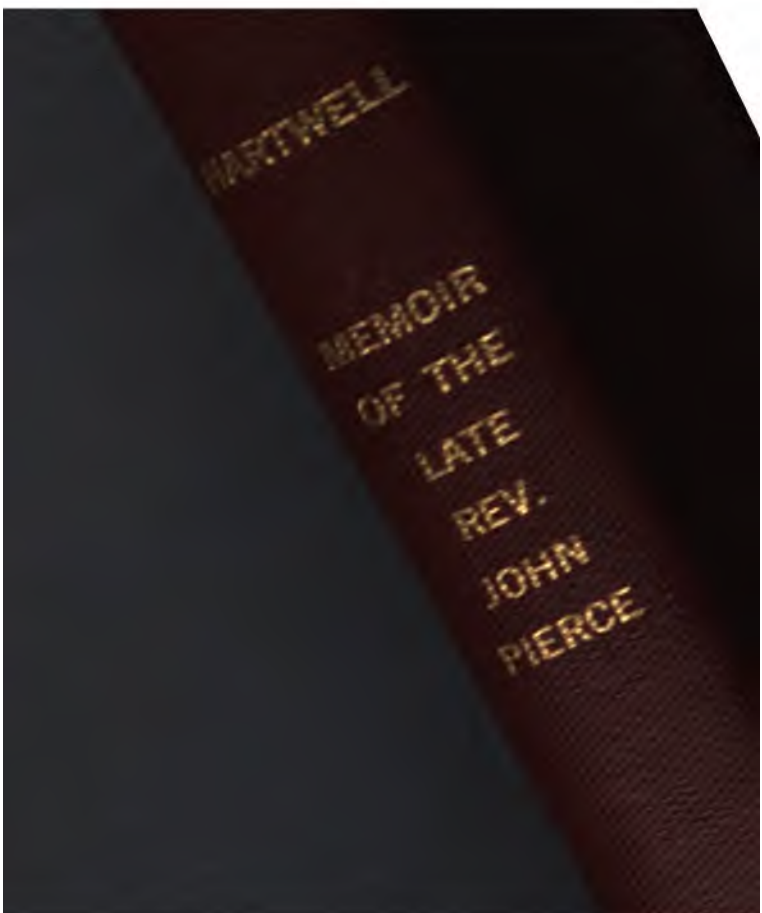
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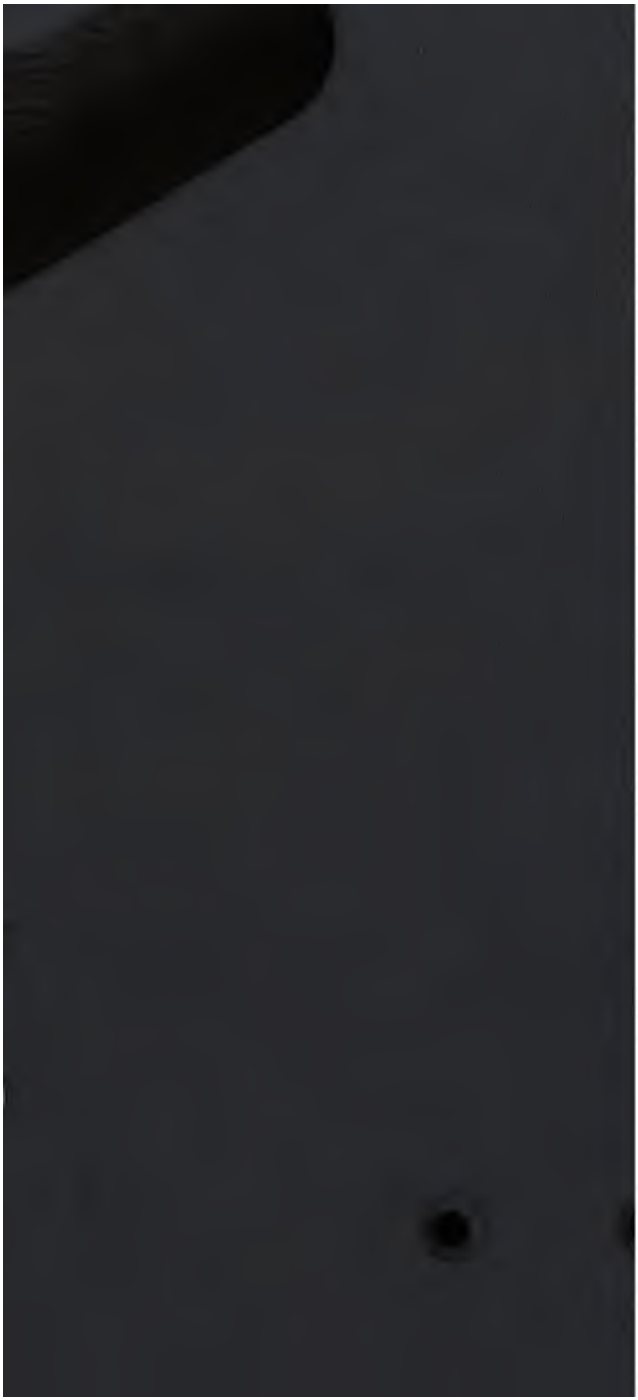

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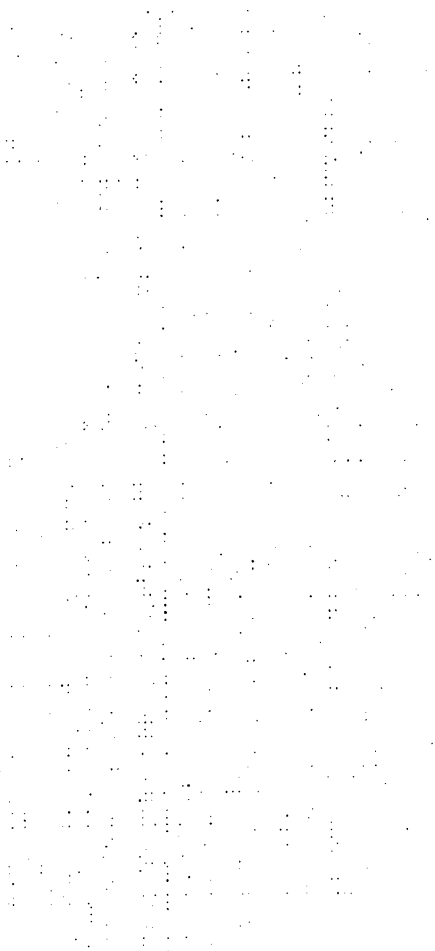

John Pierce.

Engraved at the expense of the ladies of his pastoral care

W & J. C Sharp

MEMOIR

OF THE LATE

REV. JOHN PIERCE.

BY ABRAHAM HARTWELL.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

ORIGINAL SERMONS, MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, &c.,

SELECTED FROM THE WRITINGS OF MR. PIERCE.

LUNENBURG:
PUBLISHED BY THE EDITOR.

W. J. MERRIAM—PRINTER,
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TO THE

MEMBERS AND CONGREGATIONS

OF THE SOCIETIES OF

LUNENBURG AND TOWNSEND VILLAGE,

OUT OF RESPECT TO THEM,

AND AS A LASTING REMEMBRANCE TO THEIR LATE

BELOVED PASTOR,

THIS WORK IS MOST SINCERELY AND AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

A. HARTWELL.

PREFACE.

Not having sufficient means in my possession to present the public with a full account of the life, Christian character and philanthropy of our lamented Pastor, it was with painful reluctance, that I, after many importunities from the friends of Mr. Pierce, commenced writing his biography; which, I trust, will ever be held sacred by all the lovers of truth and virtue.

Notwithstanding my incompetency, I came to the task, rather than such a worthy and faithful friend of man should fall without notice,—to sleep with the prophets and apostles,—I would use my feeble endeavors to preserve from the forgetfulness of the tomb, some relics and lessons of philanthropy, which he ever bore to mankind.

In order to do this more fully, I have introduced into this volume, sermons and miscellaneous pieces, from the pen of Mr. Pierce, together with sermons and communications, written by worthy and noted friends, who held him in high estimation.

During his short ministry, he preached four hundred and twenty-two sermons, besides many lectures before lyceums and temperance societies, &c., &c.

The Sermons published in this work were not selected by the editor; and, probably, are not the best that might have been taken. They were selected by individuals who heard them preached, and requested to have them inserted in the book. To gratify friends, I have done so, though I now regret it. And I would say, as an apology for Mr. Pierce, —whatever may be wanting to make these sermons perfect,—they were all preached the first year of his ministry. And sermon No. 4, is the first that he ever preached. And No. 2, (as you will see in a note), was preached on a particular occasion. This I learned from his journal after the sermons were in type.

Although I have procured all the information within my reach, I have been obliged to proceed with very scanty materials; and the volume will, undoubtedly, be found wanting in many respects. I have labored with honesty of purpose to rescue from the slumbers of the grave, the memory of a worthy, exemplary, and virtuous man. And though I was much attached to the lamented subject of this memoir, I have been prompted, (by the precepts which he taught,) in detailing his life and character, not to be swayed by partiality. And how well I have succeeded, is left for others to decide.

Under the blessing of God, it is hoped that this work will be the means, not only of enlightening and leading the living to practice the virtues of the worthy dead, but that generations yet unborn will rise up and call him blessed. A. H.

LUNENBURG, 1842.

CONTENTS.

MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE.

"Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord,—they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." - - - - - 13

CHAPTER II.

His determination to improve his education.—His progress. - 17

CHAPTER III.

Enters the field as a Gospel Preacher.—His Success. - - 19

CHAPTER IV.

A Fragment—from the pen of Miss Frances Pierce. - - - 23

CHAPTER V.

Funeral Services.—Mr. Greenwood's Sermon.—His Epitaph. - 27

CHAPTER VI.

Thoughts on the Death of a Friend, by Miss Julia Abby Fletcher, Lancaster, Mass. - - - - - - - - - - - 45

CHAPTER VII.

Extracts from a Sermon, by the Editor. - - - - - - 51

CHAPTER VIII.

Trials and Difficulties, which Mr. Pierce had to encounter in Lunenburg, Mass. - - - - - - - - - - - - 73

SERMONS.

SERMON I.

PAGE.

"Recompense to no man evil for evil."—Rom. xii. 17. - - 81

SERMON II.

"We pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God."—2 Cor. v. 20. - - - - - - - - - - - - 94

SERMON III.

"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling," &c.—2 Tim. i. 9, 10. - - - - - - - - - - 105

SERMON IV.

"God is love."—1 John, iv. 16. - - - - - - - 117

SERMON V.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead."—1 Cor. xv. 42. - - 130

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,

WRITTEN WHILE IN HIS MINORITY.

I. A Letter to his Sister. - - - - - - - 152

II. On Spring. - - - - - - - - - 174

III. Beauty in all things. - - - - - - - - 176

IV. Creation. - - - - - - - - - - 178

NOTE.

I MUST claim the indulgence of saying, as an apology, for all the errors and mistakes which may be found in this volume, that it has been so long a time in progress, and in the hands of different printers, and much of the time at a considerable distance from me, so that it was not convenient for me to read but few of the proof sheets. I, therefore, introduce this note rather as an apology than as an errata, trusting that it will be deemed just and pardonable. And it is hoped that all errors which may be discovered, will be passed over in a forgiving spirit.

I shall, however, point out one mortifying mistake, or rather repetition, which appears from my own pen, and which I did not discover until the sheets were printed, and it could not be corrected. It is found on page 19, at the close of the first paragraph;—the last line of this paragraph should have been omitted.

A. H.

MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

"Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord,—they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

Respect to the dead has always been shown by every nation and people under heaven. The Bible, the most ancient history extant, very fully substantiates this assertion. In ancient times, it was customary, when the person was of rank, at his departure, for the relatives and friends to embalm the body. The Egyptians had the art of embalming so perfect, that they could keep the dead body in a natural state thousands of years. After embalming and lamenting over them several days, and sometimes several months, they placed them in a tomb or cave in the earth. *Here* relatives and friends, generation after generation, could repair and look upon their departed ancestors, in as natural a state as life. This, undoubtedly, was a great consolation to the survivors. But we have not that art among us. We have to bury our dead out of our sight, and their bodies soon moulder, and dust quickly returns to dust. And, in this sad dilemma, a kind Providence has made us acquainted with the art of printing, whereby we can make records, and keep the memory of our departed friends before us. One consideration, however, is very lamentable, even while we are thus so highly privileged. That is,

the memory of all is not respectful, and worthy of example. And while the remembrance of one is fondly cherished, and held most sacred by all lovers of truth and virtue, the remembrance of another is soon forgotten, and wisely left to perish.

The dead are had in esteem, according as their characters were in their lifetime. And the world will respect them, according to the estimate of their worth while living. Memory leaves an impression, and dwells with rapture only upon the departure of those whose lives have been marked by many deeds of virtue and benevolence. The virtues of such will ever be had in grateful remembrance.

The politician and the philosopher may long be had in sweet recollection; and the renowned victor, who has fought the battles of his country, may have his name enrolled on the records of the nation, and handed down to posterity as a legacy of great value. But there is another character more deserving public notice, and more worthy to be recorded, and handed down through succeeding generations. It is the reputation of *that man* who has sacrificed both his property and life for the good of his fellow-men—who arose above the corrupting influences of earth, and become "all things to all men that he might save some."

Of this last trait of character was our much lamented Br. Pierce, whose departure calls forth this narrative. JOHN PIERCE was born March 18th, 1814, at Lunenburg, Mass. His father is both physician and farmer. In childhood, it was discovered that he was an enterprising boy. I shall relate but one incident, out of many. Doctor Bard, who has kept an office in the centre of Lunenburg some twenty years or more, has related the following to

the writer. Said he, "When Mr. Pierce was a small boy, I became attached to him. I frequently found him in my office examining my books; and when he had followed this course, at every convenient opportunity, something like a year, I had a curiosity to know his name. Therefore, one day, when he came in, with a number of other boys, I said to him, 'My boy, what is your name?' he answered, 'John Pierce.'" From that day to his dying hour, Dr. B. (though not a Universalist) was his particular friend. No one was more attentive or interested in his last sickness and death.

Mr. Pierce had a strong, powerful, and penetrating mind, which was preparing for a work that was not discoverable to the world while in childhood. He worked on his father's farm, and was uncommonly ambitious, and possessed great bodily strength. "Every thing," said his father, "was done with speed." And all passed along calmly, under the blessing of good health, till the winter before he was sixteen years old. At this period of his boyhood, he took a great cold, which brought on lung fever; and though he recovered from this sickness, it probably laid the foundation for consumption, in after life.

The June following he hurt himself by lifting, while engaged in laying stone wall; and brought on an affection of the heart.

After this misfortune, his father was convinced that he was not sufficient to work on a farm; but he remained at home till September, 1831. "He is now 17 years of age," says his father, "and I took him to Boston, and put him into a store. In October following, I went to see him, and we walked out together, and as we were passing Mr. Ballou's

meeting-house, he observed to me, (and for the first time I ever heard him say any thing about Universalism,) "I have been to meeting here, and heard Mr. Ballou preach, (naming the text) and he gave me more information than all the preaching I ever heard in Lunenburg." His father continues—"He then referred to a sermon which he heard Rev. Mr. Bartlett (Universalist) preach in Lunenburg, when he was but 10 years of age. His observation repecting Mr. B.'s discourse was this—'*That sermon was the first I ever heard, that I was sorry when it was done!*'"

It seems that here the seed was sown, but being far from any cultivator of the soil, and only 10 years old, the seed did not spring up and bring forth, until he heard Mr. Ballou.

It appears that after this, his whole soul was engaged—the seed began to take deep root, and soon brought forth ripe fruit. He could say like the blind man in the Gospel—"One thing I know—whereas I was blind, now I see." His soul was enraptured as he dwelt continually upon the theme of the love of God in the final restitution. Like a calm summer's morn, after an awful tempest, he was converted to unwavering faith in the impartial grace of God. And he soon had a strong desire to become a preacher of the "unsearchable riches of Christ." From this time he began to manifest a desire for a more literary education, and a study of the Holy Scriptures.

CHAPTER II.

His determination to improve his education. — His progress.

Mr. Pierce lived with Mr. Osgood, merchant, Boston, till winter. He then informed Mr. O. that he wanted to go to school in order to improve his education. He thought his learning was not adequate to his profession. But Mr. O. replied, "I think you only need practice." His mind being fixed, he now proposed to Mr. O.—"If you will let me go to school evenings, I will stay with you; otherwise, I should like to go home, and attend the winter school." This was a great disappointment to his employer. Mr. O. replied—"If you stay with me, I need you all the time in my store." Mr. Pierce then immediately made up his mind to come home. And when Mr. O. found that his determination was fixed, he settled with him, paid him in full for his labor, "And," says his father, "he more than paid him—he treated him like a gentleman in every respect." He then left Boston, came home, and attended the winter school.

"In his studies," said his father, "the Bible must have its place with other books. He perused it daily."

February, 1832, he again left home, and went to live with Levi Lewis, Esq., merchant, Lancaster, Mass. Here he stayed till he was 21 years old, being over three years. During this time, he was faithful in his business, and at the close received from Mr. Lewis a reference satisfactory to all, that he had been faithful to his trust.

Says his father, "When he commenced with Mr. Lewis, he bought him a pocket Bible, which he always carried with him, for the purpose of reading every convenient opportunity. After closing the store at night, instead of going to rest, he commenced reading his Bible.

"His health not being very good, he was not a stranger to the thought of death. He once observed to his sister, while in conversation, that he did not expect to live more than ten years. It seemed as though he had a great deal to do, and but little time to do it in.

"In March, 1835, being out of his minority, he left Mr. Lewis, and came home once more. He stayed but a few days. He must be up and doing."

He went to Boston, and called on the Rev. Thos. Whittemore for advice in regard to becoming a preacher. Mr. W. advised him to call on Rev. Mr. Cobb. Mr. C. advised him to pursue the English branches, and acquire a more literary education. Mr. C. accompanied him to Mr. Whittemore's office, where an arrangement was made for him to go and board with Rev. Mr. Greenwood, and attend the academy in Marlborough.

He accordingly entered the academy, April 1st, 1835, in order to prepare himself for a theological student. In the following November, the Principal gave him a recommendation to go to Dedham, and teach a winter school. Here he taught five months, and received one hundred dollars. In May, 1836, he returned to Mr. Greenwood's, and again commenced his studies.

CHAPTER III.

Enters the field as a Gospel preacher. — His success.

Sabbath morning, May 15, he delivered his first message of a world's salvation. He had now overcome every obstacle, and being not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, he preached a number of times in the vicinity of Marlborough. The Universalists of Lunenberg, receiving the news of his prosperity, as on the wings of the wind, they gave him an invitation to preach in his own native town. Accordingly, July 24th, 1836, he delivered his first sermon, to the astonishment and gratification of all who heard him, in his own native town.

He continued his studies with Mr. Greenwood till the following winter. He then went to Shirley Village, and taught school during the season, occasionally preaching in that region.

In 1837, he went to Hardwick, and preached for that society; and Dana, the following year. In Hardwick, he was set apart for the Gospel ministry, by ordination, Sept. 27th, 1837. I find the following on his journal:

"This day being appointed by the friends of Universalism in this place, for my ordination, we all came together for this purpose. In the forenoon Br. Bugbee preached. Afternoon, ordaining services commenced. Br. Greenwood preached the sermon; Br. Bugbee, the prayer; Br. Noyes, the charge; Br. Willis, the right hand of fellowship. These services were well performed, and, it is hoped, will promote the cause of truth in this place." He adds:—

"This has been a happy day to me. Holy Father, to thee I commend myself, humbly petitioning thou wilt make me a preacher of Jesus and him crucified. Be thou a light to my eyes, guiding me in the way of truth. Save me from all sin, O God; suffer me not to cause thy truth to be evil spoken of. Wilt thou cause the Gospel to have free course, and be glorified, through me. Heavenly Parent, hear this, my prayer, and answer as seemeth good."

In 1838, he preached in Dana and Lunenburg. In 1839, he preached in Lunenburg and Shirley Village.

Recapitulation.—In Hardwick, Dana and vicinity, we do not learn his success in the ministry from his journal. But, verbally, we are informed, that he succeeded far beyond his own expectations.

When he closed his labors in Shirley Village, April 5th, 1840, he records the following in his journal. "Preached in Shirley Village—meeting quite full. P. M.—Preached my farewell sermon. With this day's labor the heavens appeared pleased.—Have the satisfaction of believing that my connection with this society has been pleasing, and is now closed in friendship."

In September, 1839, he received an invitation and preached in Townsend West Village; and in a few weeks was instrumental in forming a society, and collecting a large congregation in that place. He had now the care of three societies, and was under the necessity of hiring a brother laborer to assist him.

He used his utmost exertions for the upbuilding of the cause of truth. He established Sabbath schools and Bible classes, and was no less interested in the moral reform of all classes. He had an anxious desire to engage the minds of the youth in

that which would make them wiser and happier, and more useful in after life. In order to bring about such a reform, he was instrumental in establishing a Lyceum in Lunenburg, of which he was appointed secretary, and engaged all his powers and faculties to make the school a blessing to the rising generation. He was so zealous in all his official duties which were devolving upon him, that it really seemed that he had entirely forgotten that he tabernacled in flesh, and, like others, was subject to disease and death. And even when attacked with the most alarming complaints, frequent hemorrhage from the lungs, he did not falter, nor relinquish any of his engagements, until the system was well nigh worn out, and finally gave way. He was so taken up in his several callings that his mind was lost to every thing else. Frequently after attending meeting and Lyceum till nine or ten o'clock in the evening, he would set off on foot to meet another engagement, the next day, some fifteen or twenty miles distant, while the rest of the world were locked in sleep; and when he arrived at the place of destination, he would be hardly sensible of it. He thought it impossible that he had arrived so soon. He was so deeply engaged in study, that he passed the time very insensibly.

March 27th, 1839, I find the following on his journal. "Wednesday—Lyceum in the evening. Good lecture by George Boutwell, of Groton. Chose Thomas Wiley, Esq., President; Cyrus Kilburn, Vice-President; John Pierce, Secretary and Treasurer. Adjourned to the 10th of April. *After nine I walked to South Gardner.*" This is one instance of many. "The evening was pleasant—the moon shone brightly as I passed along, and I was so

engaged in study that I arrived in Gardner before I was aware of it," said the angel who appeared in the night on a message of grace and mercy in that region.

In the Spring of 1840 he engaged to labor with the two societies in Lunenburg and Townsend. But, alas! he soon faltered under disease. The time of his departure was at hand. His work was almost done. He preached till July 19th, when he preached his last sermon, undoubtedly not having the most distant thought that that would be his last discourse,—but so it proved!

"So fades a summer cloud away;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er;
So gently shuts the eye of day;
So dies the wave along the shore."

I will only add in this chapter, Mr. Pierce was a successful minister in this part of his Master's vineyard, and has left many sympathising friends to mourn his loss.

CHAPTER IV.

A FRAGMENT,

From the pen of Miss FRANCES PIERCE, who, with all the affection a sister could manifest, with assiduity and faithfulness, almost incessantly watched over her brother, ready to administer to his most trifling wants, until his death.

I HAD the satisfaction of being with my brother the three last weeks of his sickness. At the time he was taken sick I was engaged in teaching school, which was six weeks previous to his death. I saw him on Wednesday of the second week of his confinement. He was apparently quite comfortable, but seemed very anxious concerning his situation. I had just recovered from a short illness. He compared his case with mine,—though perfectly dissimilar, still he thought they were much alike, and appeared to take much courage—thought he would soon regain his health as I had. He was anxious that I should spend the night with him. I sat by him till past twelve;—he conversed much of the time—seemed to delight to dwell upon the important subject which had been his chief interest for some years. Spoke of dying with composure. Observed "it is possible, and even probable, this will be my last sickness. Should it be, *I hope you will always remain firm in that blessed faith which has brightened our path a few years past.* But, O Lord, thy will be done." He then made a short prayer, imploring our heavenly Father to give him strength and patience to endure all, whatever the result might be. Next morning I was obliged to return to my

school. Before leaving, I stepped into his room and said I must go. He replied, "I think I shall be better when you come again." I did not see him again until the next Saturday. When I entered his room he was raising blood profusely. He scarcely noticed me for some time. When he became easier, he said, "Do you think I have altered much since you left?" I answered, "If I had not seen you raising blood so frightfully, I should think you quite as comfortable." I sat with him that night till past twelve. He conversed upon the same subject as on the evening before. He was perfectly willing to leave this world, if it was God's will. He remained quite comfortable till the next afternoon, when he was again taken raising blood, which seemed rather to depress his spirits. Thought, perhaps he should live many months, and drag out a life of consumption, which appeared dreadful to him. Thought he should prefer a short, if severe illness; but added, "May I submissively endure all."

It now became necessary for some one to be constantly with him. I proposed to sit by him till twelve, and father the remaining part of the night. Thus I was blessed with the opportunity to witness his patience day and night. One day, after his raising blood profusely, I asked him, "How does death appear to you?" He replied, "To live, especially to a person of my age, is desirable; but to die is glorious. The agony of death is distressing to think of. I expect to have a hard struggle in death; but O! the blessed faith which illumines my pathway to the tomb."

He desired me to read to him daily from the Bible; and daily did he offer up prayers that the Lord would continue to give him patience day by day,

and that if he must soon leave this world, that the societies with which he had enjoyed so much, and those with which he was then connected, would continue to exert themselves for the support of the Gospel. He wished to see and converse with all who called upon him; but the nature of his disease was such, that it was thought prudent he should be kept as quiet as possible. He wished to see every one look cheerful and happy, natural as when he was in health. He would say, "Why should any one look gloomy? I suffer scarcely any thing. I have nothing to fear. I am in the hands of a just God!"

On Thursday previous to his death, about three o'clock, A. M., he asked me if I had any hopes of his recovery. I replied, I had not, but that there was hope while life remained. He then inquired—"How will my death affect you?" I could make no reply! He continued, "*Do not be gloomy; return to your school; be composed, God deals justly with all. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the hearts of any.*"

Saturday, A. M. he appeared more natural than he had done for many days. He talked of common affairs—desired me to read from the newspaper. In the afternoon his mind was wandering.

Sabbath morning, very comfortable; desired me to get a piece of orange for him—thought it tasted naturally. In the afternoon he was again afflicted with mental aberration. It grieved him much, when in his sane mind, to be thus deprived of his reason. He prayed ardently that he might have his reason at the last trying moment. He often requested me to tell him when I thought him to be dying. Monday, the day he died, he was deprived of his reason,

excepting at short intervals. But when he had his reason, he appeared to dwell upon doing right, and carrying out humane principles. He did not seem to accomplish all he wished to say. He quoted passages of Scripture, Gal. vi. 9—"Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Some other passages I do not recollect. Talked much of heaven, in a whisper. I could not understand so as to recollect much. About nine in the evening he dropped into a calm sleep—slept till past ten—he then suddenly sprung up and said, "I am going!" I was then in the adjoining room—slipped quickly in—he looked upon me for the last time, with an inexpressible look—breathed two or three times, with his head inclined to the left, and *all was silent. A bed of death! My feelings none can tell!!*

CHAPTER V

THE FUNERAL SERVICES.

The funeral of Mr. Pierce was attended on the Wednesday afternoon following his death. A large assembly of relatives and friends were called together by the mournful occasion. The solemn services were performed in the First Parish Church in Lunenburg, Ms., of which the deceased was Pastor when he died; and although the house is very large, it was filled to overflowing. The corpse was brought into the meeting-house and placed in front of the pulpit, during the services. The scene was truly solemn and awful; tears and sighs expressed the feelings of that vast assembly, while the Rev. Thos. J. Greenwood delivered a very appropriate discourse from the three passages of Scripture which Mr. Pierce had selected for the occasion. When he saw that the lamp of life burned more and more dimly, he sent for Mr. Greenwood, and requested him to preach his funeral sermon. He gave him directions, and he preached accordingly. The following are the passages:—"For we which have believed do enter into rest."—Heb. iv. 3. "But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing."—Gal. iv. 18. "Finally, brethren, farewell."—II Cor. xiii. 11.

SERMON,

Delivered at the funeral of Rev. John Pierce, in Lunenburg, Sept. 2, 1840, By Rev. T. J. Greenwood, of Marlborough.

Beloved Friends:—We have assembled under circumstances calculated to make a powerful and lasting impression on our minds; and though the occasion on which we meet, be one of heart-felt sorrow, yet I know there are circumstances connected with it, which are calculated to render it highly instructive, and profitable to every mind which is prepared to receive the strong, yet tender appeals of that blessed Gospel which is the wisdom of God and the power of God, unto the salvation of every one that believeth.

A youthful soldier of the Lord Jesus has exchanged the burnished armor of the Gospel for the icy armor of death! A young watchman hath suddenly vanished from the walls of our Zion, and his voice shall no longer cheer the dwellers within the city of our God with the cheering, peaceful exclamation, "*All is well!*" No longer shall his earnest appeals, breathing redeeming love and mercy, lure within its sacred precincts the wandering and the lost. No; the finger of silence is on his lips—the coldness of death is on his heart; and the places that knew him on earth, shall know him no more forever!

Note to the Reader.—Those who heard the discourse at the funeral of our brother, will not find the following *verbatim*. It was mostly delivered *extempore*, and is the first attempt of the author to write out a discourse from memory. For any deficiency of fulness of thought, or labored argument, the only apology is, that as a sincere mourner at the time of its delivery, the writer's mind was in a condition more suited to be ministered unto, than to minister. T. J. G.

But how has he retired? How has he put off his armor? Has he gone like one unfaithful to his trust? Has he fled like the faithless, leaving evidence behind that the spirit of an *hireling* prompted him to assume a station in which his heart felt no interest? Has he thus laid aside his armor, like one who wanted courage or constancy to wear it longer? I bless God, NO! But although he has thus early left his place vacant upon the walls—though in the conflict he has yielded even in the morning of his promise and his hopes, when many hearts beat proudly at the bright prospects of usefulness and honor that lighted up his path, it has only been to that stern power whose hand bears down alike the mighty and the weak of earth—at whose bidding earth's mightiest monarch's fall, and her loftiest genius, and noblest inspiration yield; and at whose resistless mandate, the holy prophets and the faithful apostles, and the holiest and best of earth have bowed! No: although Death, the fell destroyer of all earthly hopes, the blaster of all earthly prospects, has left nought of our beloved brother, to our outward senses, but the cold and lifeless form of what was, a short time since, life, and energy, and zeal; yet, even in the mortal conflict, has this servant of God given ample proof that he himself was "conqueror, yea more than conqueror, through him that loved him." For, added to a long life of usefulness, (though brief in years, long, because in it much, very much of good was accomplished, for they have lived long, however early their exit, who have lived usefully,) he has left behind him the important testimony, that a life of faith and duty yields not only a *life*, but a death of peace and triumph, as its fruit—that they who live

the Christian's life, the Christian's death can die! For while his life gave constant evidence of the cheering and purifying spirit of that blessed faith which he had early imbibed, in his death he bore the most ample testimony to its sustaining and peace-giving power.

He had embraced the Gospel of God our Saviour, in the love of it. He had striven to shape his life by its holy requirements. He had preached it as "Glad tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people"—as the spirit of "peace on earth, and good will to men." He had commended it to others, as the antidote of all moral disease, the soother of all earthly sorrows, and the inspirer of IMMORTAL HOPE. And, in his death, he has fully shown that his confidence in its power was not misplaced, nor his hopes resting on a false foundation. And if, in his life and health, he labored with earnestness and zeal to commend it to his fellow-men as worthy their reception and support, he has, from his death-bed, preached it far more impressively, and I pray God, even more successfully than even while in health he stood before you in this consecrated desk, to accompany its breathings with the spirit of earnest prayer. For, cold, indeed, must be the heart, and blunted the sensibilities of that soul, (and especially of the little flock to which he lately ministered in this place,) that will not be moved, and melted, and inspired by that strong and striking exhibition of Christian faithfulness and love for man, which he manifested when he found that his earthly labors were drawing to a close. And let me say to you, my Christian friends, that, though silent, he hath not ceased to preach. For "he being dead, yet speaketh." Yes; I am before you at his dying

request, to speak in behalf of that tongue which is now silent forever; to offer the words of encouragement, comfort and peace; the exhortation to steadfastness and fidelity; and the dying benedictions of a heart once warm and throbbing in love to God and man, but now pulseless in death; a heart which, while it beat, beat only in desire to do good, and whose last pulsations told of faithfulness in the work.

Nor have I been left to the necessity of even selecting a theme for present meditation. The tender solicitude of the expiring Christian for the people of his care, employed even his latest thoughts on portions of Scripture, at once expressive of the condition of his own mind, and evincive of his strong desire that those whom his dying thoughts could influence, might be led to seek the rest and consolation which he then enjoyed, and which he ever found in the way of trust and duty. And, O! could I speak as was his spirit stirred, when he gave in charge the solemn duty which I now attempt to perform, I am sure the souls of all would be melted, moved, inspired to breathe the Psalmist's ardent prayer, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

The last time I saw our beloved brother while living, was by his request. His disease had taken a turn, which led him to suppose his recovery was doubtful, and his end probably near, and he desired that I might be sent for. When I arrived, though from extreme exhaustion he was unable to converse much, yet all his thoughts were turned in anxiety, to spend the few remaining hours of his life in profit to the people of his charge and to his fellow-men. Said he, (as nearly as I can recollect his words,)

"Brother Greenwood, I suppose, from the nature of my disease, I may have but a short time to live; and while I live I feel that I ought to do all the good I can for the cause we love. I have sent for you, therefore, to ask you, in the event of my death, to preach a discourse at my funeral. I have thought of such portions of Scripture, for the subject of your discourse, as would best express the *condition of my own mind* NOW; my sense of the duty which mankind owe to the cause of Gospel truth; my desire that my friends should heartily engage in its support; and my dying desire for their welfare." And he then named *three* passages of Scripture—from each of which I shall offer a few remarks, in the order in which he named them, wishing to have it distinctly understood, that it was his request that it should be stated that they were selected by him; and for the reasons already given.

The first is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, 4th chapter, 3d verse: "*We which have believed do enter into rest.*" In proceeding to comment on this passage, I remark, what I trust will be borne in mind by every careful reader of the New Testament, that the faith of the Gospel is always recognized therein, as the foundation of joy and rejoicing in the human mind. And in no instance is that faith ever mentioned as the source of a single tear, or the prompter of a solitary sigh in *any* breast. But, on the contrary, REST, JOY, PEACE, were the hallowed emotions which it constantly inspired; and this arose from the very circumstances of man's being, in connection with the tidings which it brought.

Before the blessed Gospel was proclaimed, the world was in a condition deplorable indeed. Nor can its condition be more fitly or graphically de-

scribed, than in the language of inspiration: "Darkness covered the earth; and gross darkness the people." Not that the glorious heavens did not then beam in as bright effulgence by day, and her glittering hosts shed over night's gloom their mild and placid light, even as now; not that the earth did not bear its fruits for the sustenance of man, and its grassy carpet beneath him bloom as fresh and verdantly, and countless and refreshing streams flow as gently, and murmur as sweetly as at the present. No! but the *mind*, the MIND was darkness; and for it the glories and the beauties of nature smiled in vain. Its condition was like that of the tenant of the dreary prison, sighing constantly for deliverance, yet hoping no relief. The gushing desires for life and enjoyment rose up in the human breast, in longings that could not be uttered, and yet was the soul's vision bounded by the narrow limits of earth. With yearnings for continued being, strong as the mightiest emotions of the soul, his fears were, that, like the insect that sports its day and dies, so man was destined, life's short journey over, to sink in the rayless caverns of oblivion's night. Her sable curtains were around every thing but the present, and man was "without God, and without *hope* in the world.

> "For who to cold forgetfulness a prey,
> This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned,
> Left the bright precincts of the realms of day,
> Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?"

And yet that backward look was unsatisfying. The present, without hope, was insupportable; and the desires of the soul stretched on, until they rested against a dense and impenetrable cloud, and all to man beyond, was "chaos and old night." Amid

the perplexities of earth, the exclamation of Job, "I would not live alway," was the language of the heart; and man, though unprepared to die, was still unqualified to live.

"For who *would* live, when longings urg'd away
To leap the narrow boundaries of time,
To seek the regions of a brighter day,
And bask forever in a cloudless clime?
Yet who, alas! when brooding shadows lower,
And veil for aye, hope's blessed, cheering light,
Could yield himself to death's relentless power,
And court the shades of never-ending night?

That man is frail and fallible, and a creature of constant want, even in his *best estate*, I need not stop to argue; for human experience universally will bear testimony to this truth. It is written on our natures in characters not to be misunderstood; we feel it as we feel we live. And if, in their *best* condition, men are thus fragile, and thus constantly needy, what, in the varied aspect which humanity bears, in the less favored spheres in which men move, must be the condition of the countless millions, who are passers in one endless caravan over the checkered scenes of human life?

We say not, nor do we at all believe, that God, the great Author of our being and our destiny, has made the earth, of necessity, to be to its hurried passers a "*vale of tears*;" that He has created us, and placed us here in utter regardlessness of our wants! And much less do we affirm that, in wanton sport with our happiness, our aspirations, and our hopes, he ushered us into existence, with "tears for our birthright, and death as our end." For it is our blessed privilege to know, from the teachings of His son, by whom, in these latter days, he has spoken unto us, that he has made us capable of a

more pleasing progress through life, and holds us to a higher destiny, and a more glorious end. Nor need I dwell long on the causes of man's unhappiness on earth; but I may remark, in brief, what will be readily responded to by all, that much, indeed, of what we suffer, nay, all the real misery we endure, arises from two causes: 1st, a want of light; and, 2d, a neglect in us to heed those laws which the finger of God has written on our hearts; by disregarding which, we walk without reference to the relation in which we stand to each other, and thus deprive ourselves of that happiness which even existence on earth is capable of affording.

Left to the unenlightened, unguided promptings of our darkened minds, and especially to the influence of our baser passions, we walk as the bewildered travellers through a deep, dense wilderness; pursuing often the paths not only the most crooked and hopeless, but often the most fatal to our peace. SIN is in the world; SIN, the deceptive self-proffered guide of the willingly enslaved; sin, which, in its syren voice, first warbled its beguiling strains amid the blooming bowers of paradise, and bound in its cruel fetters the first human pair who yielded to its fascinating notes, and thrust them from the beautiful garden of God; sin, the foe of human felicity, hath written the history of the world's keenest suffering with her own gall-steeped pen; and in her rough and thorny pathway have the children of humanity in imitation of the first,

> "With wandering steps and slow,
> From Eden bent their thorny, rugged way."

So walked the wayward pilgrims of the antediluvian world; so walked the self-apostatised people of God, the Jews; and so has walked the heathen

world in every land. And so, alas! walk now the misconceivers and contemners of that light which God has shed upon the world.

Such was the mental condition of the world, and under night's dominion ages rolled away; but at length, through the tender mercies of our God, a dispensation was unfolded, suited to man's wants. The day-star from on high visited earth, to give light to them that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death; to guide the feet of earth's weary wanderers in the way of peace. It unfolded the eternal purpose of the Immortal Father to illuminate and bless the minds of men; to give repentance and remission of sins; to reconcile and assimilate all spirits to his own, by liberating the "creation itself from this bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God;" to "swallow up death in victory, and wipe tears from off all faces;" thus banishing all darkness from the mind of universal humanity, eradicating sin from every breast, crowning a universe of intelligent and dependent creatures with immortal life, and presenting the ineffably glorious spectacle of a world of mind in harmony with the spirit of infinite love, and inspired with the grateful praise of their Creator and their God. Aye, eliciting from every soul whom God hath created, the grateful and triumphant acknowledgment, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." In a word, pouring the light of the ever blessed Gospel, in all its fulness, on a benighted, a sin-enslaved and a miserable world; and through faith in its glorious revealings, filling the hearts of its recipients with that peace of God which passeth knowledge, and enabling those who leaned in faith on its blessed

promises, to bear their testimony to its holy power, in the language chosen by our departed brother, as the subject of my comment, "*We which have believed do enter into rest.*"

It was not because he delighted in cold and dreamy speculations, that our brother selected this passage; it was not because in theory only he could discover in it an expression of the peace it had power to give; but because, by personal experience, he had felt and realized the REST which Gospel truth imparts to the believing soul; because to him its language had long been, and then was, blessed reality; because it had rendered his life cheerful, his heart pure, his labors zealous, and his hopes bright; because, at length, when he was called to the bed of death, it brought its brightest, fullest blessings there, dissipating all the gloom that sickness and the prospect of dissolution had power to inspire, disarming death of all its terrors, sweetly reconciling the soul to God, and causing the dying *fully* to realize the beauty and the truth of the language of the poet, so often sung, so seldom *felt*,

> "Jesus can make the dying bed,
> Feel soft as downy pillows are,
> While on his breast I lean my head
> And breathe my life out sweetly there."

And it was because he, in bearing his dying testimony to the saving and sustaining power of the Gospel which he had preached, had a strong and irrepressible desire to commend it to the little flock he loved, and to whom he had ministered of its joys in the days of their prosperity, its comforts in the hour of their sufferings, and its consolations in the moments of their sorrow. It was because he would have the minds of all whom his labors in life, and

his soul's desire in the hour of death, could influence, imbued, as was his mind, with its heavenly principles, earnest in labors to extend its blessings to the needy, and calmly and sweetly resting in its blessed hopes. And hence, also, as his dying appeal to those, to whom, in health, he had labored in "Word and Doctrine," he chose for your consideration and encouragement, when his lifeless form should lie before you, the words which, if living, he would have delighted to utter. "*It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.*" Galatians iv. 18.

The observation of our brother had taught him how frequently inclined to coldness and indifference to their highest interests, are the children of men; how negligent of their duty to be helpers of each other in bearing the burdens of life—to labor to remove those burdens by the spread of Gospel truth. He had looked on the world with a philosopher's eye; he beheld it groaning in the cruel bondage of ignorance and sin—enslaved by passion, and oppressed by fear! As a philanthropist, he felt a yearning desire to ameliorate the condition of human kind; and as a CHRISTIAN, he saw and felt the redeeming power of Gospel truth. He knew its adaptedness to human wants, and its adequacy to the need of man. He knew, he *felt* the purifying and peace-giving influences it could throw around the mind; the spirit of emancipation which it breathed, and the immortal glories it revealed; and that when received by faith, the soul of man is FREE. He knew, also, that in order to be received, its principles must be unfolded to the mind, its value urged, and its power exemplified.

He believed that God had designed to carry on

the great work of spreading the Gospel, and thus enlightening and emancipating the mind, by the instrumentality of man, guided by His Spirit, and crowned by His blessing. He felt that each could do *something*, yea, MUCH, in the "good" and glorious work, and he would, therefore, have ALL zealously affected in discharge of their duty; inasmuch as "it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." And to you, my brethren, of this little flock of Universalists, how forcible must be this appeal, coming as it does from the dying lips of one who ministered in its spirit, to his kindred and his townsmen, and breathing, as it does, a desire for your welfare, the sincerity and fervency of which no one can question.

I trust I may be permitted to allude to one fact, which should reach every heart, awaken every mind, and arouse every soul to vigorous action. Our departed brother has not alone left you the convictions of his mind, the language of his lips, the desires of his heart, and the example of his life, to induce you to labor; but, to encourage and stimulate your exertions, he has left you his *earthly all!*

True, his possessions were not great, but such as they were, they were the fruits of untiring industry and rigid economy, an amassing from the scanty pittance which his labors received. And now witness the far-reaching benevolence of his soul! When drawing to the close of life, and anxious to know how he might act in humble imitation of his Master, in conferring blessing even in death, he looked forward to the well-being of his native town, to the beneficent influences which the preached Gospel might impart, even to coming generations; to the blessings, and the rest, it might carry to many

needy minds; and to aid, so far as lay in his power, the promulgation of that Gospel it was his delight to preach, he has generously bequeathed the fruits of all his industrious labors to aid you in the work. And I should do injustice to my own convictions, as also to the feelings of your souls, I trust, did I harbor a doubt that you will heed the earnest voice by which, "he, being dead, yet speaketh," and add of *your* means, your exertions, and your lives, to carry out the work which, by his aid, has been here so well and so worthily begun. Remember, brethren, how much of responsibility rests upon you; how affectingly, yea, how solemnly you have been called to labor. And I pray God earnestly, that you may realize, and *act* the truth, that "it is good to be zealously affected always, in a good thing."

I have one word more to utter in behalf of the departed; to us, the most painful and affecting of all. When he had completed his earthly labors, disposed of his effects for the furtherance of the Gospel, and dictated his last, his dying counsel to the people whom he loved, and with whom, in love he had been privileged to labor, he bade me speak to you in the language of II Corinthians, xiii. 11, which his spirit warmly, fervently, and affectionately breathed, "*Finally, brethren, farewell!*" This language, under the circumstances in which it was adopted, was meant in no cold and heartless formality. It dropped not thoughtlessly and unfeelingly from his lips, but became the warm and fervent prayer of a departing friend, for the welfare of those whose good he sought by his ministry in life, and by supplication in the hour of death. Receive it as his dying benediction, and may the blessing of God attend it.

Yes, brethren, worthily and faithfully has our brother lived, and thus peacefully, triumphantly, and affectingly has he died. And we, alas, are left to mourn! To mourn, *not for him*, but for ourselves, and the society in which he moved; that one of the excellent of the earth, in the morning of life, in the brightness of his promise, and in the midst of his usefulness, has gone, to be with us no more. He, thank God, is beyond the reach of sorrow, or of pain! And let me say, the finger of his love, and his example, points to the only source of comfort which is adequate to our need—the blessed Gospel, in which his faith reposed, and whose promise he found verified in his own condition while with us, which led him to adopt its language, "We which have believed, do enter into rest." Ay, *rest to the soul*, is the result of Christian faith! Rest, calm as the unruffled bosom of the sleeping lake, and delightful to the spirit, as Innocence resting on the bosom of Peace! And, under the influence of that Gospel, however sore our bereavements, we are constrained not to sorrow as those who have no hope, but may confidently lean upon God's word, till death is swallowed up in *victory*, and with those who have gone before us, and those who shall come after, we meet in the spirit-land, to part no more.

But there are those here who stand in special need of the strengthening aid of the Father of Mercies—the personal relatives of the deceased. To them let me offer a word. To the father and mother let me say, that though the cup you are called to drink, is a cup of bitterness, yet you should remember it was *mingled by a* FATHER'S *hand*. He has the power to over-rule it to your blessing; to turn your sorrows into joy. I know, my brother,

that this bereavement to you must be trying in the extreme. An intimate acquaintance with your son, as an inmate of my family for two years, has given me a knowledge of his worth. The meekness of his deportment, the kindness of his disposition, the purity of his life, his unyielding adherence to truth and virtue, and his love of God and man, are ineffaceably written on my memory. And I confess, that before such a character as he has manifested, living and dying, my soul bows down in reverence. And I know, too, full well, that to be deprived of such a son, on whom you hoped to lean when walking down the declivity of life, in whom your fond affections were garnered up, must be painful indeed. But for you, my brother, and for all who mourn with you, in this bereavement, there is comfort, there is solace, there is rest in the blessed Gospel which has brought life and immortality to light for a world. Its heavenly and supporting power has been fully exemplified in your presence. O, may it sustain and comfort your souls! May your faith in God be strong, that the time cometh, when you shall meet this cherished treasure, whose departure you now mourn, where the fulness of joy shall lift all souls in gratitude to God, that earth's vast millions have been REDEEMED from *sin* and *suffering*, through Him that loved us; and death *is* swallowed up in VICTORY!

And now, may God sustain you, while you shall bear the mortal remains of him you loved to the narrow house, and sustain you through all time. The duty is painful, but so is the will of God. Let our souls submit, and the hopes, the consolations, and the peace of the ever-blessed Gospel be ours.

And now, our departed brother, we reciprocate

thy dying greeting. Precious to us wert thou in life. Precious, though thou art dead, shall be thy memory while we live. "*Farewell*," but *not for ever!* We shall MEET again where tears are never shed, and sighs heave not the breast.

"To thy God thy god-like spirit
Back we give in filial trust,
Thy cold clay—we grieve to bear it
To its chamber, but we must."

May we imitate thy virtues, and may our constant prayer be, let me die the death of the righteous; let my last end be like his.—AMEN.

At the close of these services, his remains were removed to their lonely mansion in the north burying ground in Lunenburg. A suitable marble stone has since been erected, to mark his silent dwelling, by the Universalists of Lunenburg, inscribed with the following:

REV.

JOHN PIERCE,

A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL
OF THE GRACE OF GOD,
WHICH BROUGHT SALVATION
TO ALL MEN. PASTOR OF THE
FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
IN LUNENBURG.
HE DIED AUG. 31, 1840,
AGED 26 YEARS.

HE DIED IN YOUTH;—BUT HIS LIFE WAS A VERIFICATION OF THE MAXIM, "THEY LIVE LONG WHO LIVE WELL." HIS HIGHEST EULOGY WAS WRITTEN IN THE HEARTS OF THOSE TO WHOM HE MINISTERED; AND THE BLESSED POWER OF THE GOSPEL WHICH HE PREACHED TO OTHERS, WAS MANIFESTED IN HIS OWN LIFE, AND IN THE PEACE-GIVING INFLUENCE IT SHED AROUND HIS DYING PILLOW.

ERECTED BY THE UNIVERSALISTS OF LUNENBURG.

I. N. Stone, Harvard.

CHAPTER VI.

THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

BY JULIA ABBY FLETCHER, LANCASTER, MASS.

"He, the young and strong, who cherished
Noble longings for the strife,
By the road-side fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life! LONGFELLOW.

AMID the myriad sorrows that darken our way, there is one that we most deeply feel,—the loss of cherished friends. Amid the many shadows which pass over our hearts, there cometh one more dark than all,—the shadow of death. One would think that the very frequency with which it glideth over our sunny homes, would lead us less to dread its coming. But although ages have passed away since this mysterious visitant first entered our fair earth, yet it is still wrapped in the same dark mantle. Its footfall soundeth all as mournfully in our halls, as when the first-called laid him down to die, wrapped in his blood-stained shroud. Thus must it ever be. We may not lay the sunny brow in dust, and yet not weep. We may not close for aye those eyes which ever beamed with kindness on our way, and press a last fond kiss upon those lips of love, yet feel no pang of wo. No; we may lift our thoughts, in trusting love, to Him who bade this wo be ours, and say, "Thy will be done,"—but the prayer must come from the depths of a grief-wrung heart. We may plant fair flowers above the grave, but we must water them with our tears.

And yet we would not call them back to life, to bear again its burdens and its toils. O, no! we

love them all too well to wish to win them back from heaven's bright realm. Even amid our tears there cometh unto us a thought of joy, that they will weep no more.

"We miss them when the board is spread;
We miss them when the prayer is said;
Upon our dreams their dying eyes
In still and mournful sadness rise.

But they are where these lodgings vain
Trouble no more the heart and brain;
The sadness of this aching love,
Dims not our Father's house above."

Methinks we should learn to love death for the sake of those whom it hath borne away. It has been unto them a messenger of pleasant tidings, bidding them leave the wearing cares of earth and seek a fairer home. Why, O why, should we dread the summons?

"Brief is the work of death;
But life! the spirit shrinks to see
How full, ere Heaven recalls the breath,
The cup of wo may be."

How touchingly beautiful are the words of the gifted Mrs. Gilman. "Sometimes in looking over my relics of the past I see a soft light curl. I took it from the brow of a child as he lay beautiful in death; his perfect features still and fair as chiselled marble. I had watched his slow decay; I saw the dimpled hand grow thin, the blue eye become dim, and the smile that once lit his face, beam slow and sickly. His little arm could no longer clasp my neck; he lay passive in my arms, and so he died. *What a struggle has he escaped! How often might that severed curl have lain upon a throbbing temple — how often been pressed by a hand whose pulses beat to sorrow and despair.*" Yes, how often might the

loved who lie in the quiet grave have sighed for its repose. How often might the heart, now cold and still, have beat with aching sadness. The prophet of God "requested for himself that he might die." And many a human heart has prayed for death, as never captive prayed for freedom's blessed boon.

> "Thou art welcome, O, thou summoner!
> My soul hath pined for thee;
> Thou art welcome as sweet sounds from shore
> To wanderer on the sea."

This would be the language of many a lip now wreathed with sunny smiles, could it but speak the soul within. We sigh not for the flower when its leaves are scattered to the summer air, but when the worm is preying upon its life and beauty. O, mourn not then the dead. Their earthly frames now rest in death,—their spirits dwell with God.

The words of the ancient Hebrew dirge are sounding in our ears, "Mourn for the mourner, and not for the dead, for they are at rest, and we in tears." Yes, *they are at rest.* Long and weary, perchance, was their mortal pilgrimage, but they are now *at rest.* Let us but cherish a trusting faith that all shall meet at last, and the bitterness of death is past. We do not mourn that they have early found the home of peace, but that their pleasant smiles have vanished from our side. It *is* hard, to list in vain for the tone which has been unto us as cherished music; to meet no more the glance which ever dwelt on us in love, and the earth seemeth dark and lonely to the mourner.

How blissful then is the thought, "they are at rest." No sorrow shall enter their abode; no lingering care shall ever mar their joy. The flowers that we have cherished have not faded, they have

been transplanted to a fairer land. We could not bear to see them withering here, and they have been borne to a more congenial clime. We miss them from our garden walks, but in perennial fragrance they are blooming now around our Father's throne.

The memory of the dead;—it is a sacred trust; would that it were even more fondly cherished. It should be with us through every stage of our weary pilgrimage, beckoning us onward to the realms of bliss. It should be with us in the hour of prayer, adding fervency to our petitions,—in the hour of trial, strengthening the heart,—in the hour of temptation, shielding our souls from sin.

We hear their voices in the busy crowd, and in nature's deepest solitudes. In every breeze their tones of love are heard, and we bless them for their kindly ministries. We are lonely, but they come unto us with gentle whisperings of buried love, and we are lonely no more. We are oppressed with sadness, and their spirit lyres are all attuned to the melody of hope, and faith, and grateful praise, until our hearts once more are filled with joy. But it is at the twilight hour, when we sit down to commune with them, and with our own hearts, that we listen most eagerly for the coming of those silvery accents. Then it is that we have a spell and a power unknown before, to bless and sanctify the heart. Then it is that the pride which has nerved the heart to bear the weary conflict of the day without a murmur, has deserted us; that the forms which have been around our way have departed, and the spirit is left in its own loneliness, to pine for a purer and holier clime, where its lofty purposes may become but the prophets of its deeds; where the many deep, and burning, and passionate, but

all unuttered thoughts, which dwell within the mind, may find a language, and we no more may make

"A ladder of our thoughts, where angels step,
But sleep ourselves at the foot."

Then it is that these heavenly messengers breathe their most cheering tones. They bring the glad assurance of a brighter and a sinless existence. They bring the tidings of a ransomed world, rejoicing around the throne. They whisper, 'There *the prisoned bird is free.*' Blissful assurance! Joyful sound! No more the spirit beats its mortal cage in its vain struggle to be free, to soar to other worlds. In calm, triumphant faith it waits the hour, when the trials and sorrows of earth are but things gone by, we shall all stand around the throne of God, and the redeemed and sinless universe shall say, "Blessing and honor, and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever!"

DIRGE.

BRAVE soldier of the Cross, we bid thee now
A long farewell:
The seal of death upon thy youthful brow
Doth sadly dwell.

We know not why it is the loved and young
Are called to die,
To leave the light, hope o'er their path hath flung,
And seek the sky,—

While many a weary, aching heart is left
To journey on;
To tread a path of every joy bereft,
The sad and lone.

Yet this we know, a God of love doth dwell
On heaven's bright shore;—
We know our Saviour hath done all things well,
We ask no more.

Well hast thou borne the burden and the strife,
To mortals given;
Unmurmuringly didst thou meet the toils of life;
Rest now in heaven.

Brother in Christ, thy course was onward ever,
In duty's way,
Still didst thou toil the captive's bonds to sever,
To shed the ray

Of heavenly hope upon the mind benighted,
And cheer the gloom,
With the blest hope which thine own pathway lighted
Unto the tomb.

Thy every wish was for the faith that won
Thy early youth,
It shared thy every thought till life was done,
Herald of truth!

And when in peace thou laidst thee down to sleep
The sleep of death,
Thou didst that holy faith in gladness keep
With thy last breath.

Brother in Christ, we cannot choose, but mourn,
Sad our farewell,
But thy pure spirit to its rest hath gone
In joy to dwell.

CHAPTER VII.

EXTRACTS FROM A SERMON,

BY THE EDITOR.

"Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness."—Ps. lxxxviii. 18.

My brethren, friends and relatives of the deceased pastor of this society, I would not wound your souls afresh, or open those wounds which have been partially healed. No, I would not go down to the grave, and bring up the ghost of your lamented minister, in order to excite your minds, and renew the sorrows of your hearts. No, I would not put on the garb of the terrific, merely to rend your souls, but I know, kind friends, even by my own experience, that your minds love to dwell upon the sweet recollection of those loved ones with whom you once associated, for you have marked their graves, you have set up monuments, and you frequently retire to the lonely mansion, and there take much consolation, while you weep over the dust of your departed relatives. O, let me ask, then, will it not be some joy and comfort to you, to spend a few moments, this morning, in taking a retrospective view of those bygone days, when we enjoyed the interesting visits in private, and the public preaching of your deceased pastor. My brethren, I feel incompetent to eulogize or even to do justice, in speaking of the worthy and

Note.—In the winter of 1841, the editor received an invitation to preach for the Universalist Society in Lunenburg, and accordingly prepared this Sermon; but as it was not delivered, many of the friends expressed a desire to have it published in this work, as it contained a part of Mr. Pierce's biography.

exalted character of our late minister, the Rev. Mr. PIERCE.

You will not expect me, in this discourse, to detail to you the whole life of our lamented brother. I shall only, at present, notice a few particulars, as we pass along, leaving his childhood and all his private life, in which may be found wisdom and economy, prudence and perseverance, worthy of the imitation and example of all. We commence our brief history at that period of his life when he stood forth "for the defence of the Gospel."

Starting from this point, and following on through four short years of his public ministry, and all is told. We hear his strains of eloquence no more; his voice is hushed in death, and his racked and worn out body lodged in its final resting place. But, my brethren, I would not pass over his last years so rapidly.

I shall now call your attention to a few particulars. 1. What induced Mr. Pierce to become a preacher of the Gospel? 2. What influence did a firm belief in the Gospel have on his life? 3. What was the death which he died? I have here noted three very important particulars, to be discussed, concerning either a public or private character.

But I rejoice that I can say, with so much confidence, that, the more Mr. Pierce's character is examined, the brighter it will shine, and the more he will be extolled, and the longer remembered. And now, if you will have patience with my weakness, I will proceed. And, 1. What did induce Mr. Pierce to become a preacher of the Gospel? Here, my brethren, is an inquiry of the greatest importance; for the world has always been infested with false teachers. Was it popularity that led him to

become a preacher of the 'final restitution?' I answer, no; for this order of Christians are only counted by the great and popular, as the 'filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things.' Then, to become a preacher of this sect, he must renounce all hopes of being popular. But was it the gain of this world? did he preach only to make merchandise of the word of God? No one can think so, who will consider, that he had served an apprenticeship with a merchant in a neighboring town, and could have gone into business, where he could have accumulated more property, in one half year, than all which his prudent hand had laid by, out of all which he had received for preaching during his whole ministry; and I believe, that I should be justified in saying, that no one in the ministry, of whatever order, at the present day, preached for so little compensation, as Mr. Pierce did. And I venture to say, that no one will have the presumption to contend for a moment, that he entered the ministry, with the least expectation either of becoming popular or rich. Will any have the audacity to say, that he became a preacher in order to lead an easy, indolent life? I reply, every one who knew him, knows full well that such a life was as contrary to his natural temperament, as light is to darkness. Therefore to assert this, would not only be a grievance on departed worth, but malicious wickedness, and wilful slander.

The only sad reflection, which we have to notice, in this attempted history, here comes to view. He was intemperate in zeal and ambition. He had not that care for his health which he ought to have had. He poured out his life, like water, in the cause which he had espoused. Alas! my brethren, did

we not repeatedly hear him preach, after his health was enfeebled, and disease prominent?

You will never forget his tottering steps in making his way to this sacred desk, and his trembling voice, on the last Sabbath that he ever preached. Here we witnessed what *too much ambition* had done. It had *marked its victim; it made sure its aim, and soon were all our high hopes laid in a premature grave.* But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing," said our late minister, when on his death-bed. Yes, it is good to have ambition and zeal in every lawful calling and undertaking in life; but there is a point, beyond which, if we go, it becomes an evil. We will not reflect, however, on this, but proceed to make further inquiry. What did induce him to enter the field as a Gospel laborer? I will here observe, that two or three years ago, I had a conversation with our deceased pastor on this subject. It will, perhaps, be proper for me to state what led to this conversation. It was this: some of the Calvinistic Society in this place expressed a desire to ask Rev. Mr. Pierce if he had ever experienced religion? I embraced the first opportunity, and informed him of their inquisitiveness; and never shall I forget his readiness to express himself, and the satisfaction which he gave me. Said he, "I have experienced religion, and should be delighted to inform them, *when* and *where*. "But," he added, "I do not wish to boast of a great experience; however, I will tell you. *I experienced religion in the town of Lancaster, while walking on the banks of the Nashua, and prayerfully meditating on the wonderful works of nature; and then raising my eye up to nature's God, who is the Creator and sustainer of all things, and was converted to the doc-*

trine of the final restitution of all things, which God hath spoken, by the mouth of all the holy prophets, since the world began. And," he continued, "*if* they ask you any more questions *about my experience,* you can now give them some information about it." But little did I think, that I should be called in this public manner, to relate his experience, when he was dead and gone. But such is the fact. "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness."

I will now attempt to answer the interrogation, what did induce Mr. Pierce to become a preacher? I answer, it was his conversion to what God had purposed in himself, before the world was—that in the fulness of time, he would gather together in one, all things in Christ, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, even in him. Being born into the fold of God, his whole soul was enlarged, and he could not refrain from speaking. He saw that God was love, and that we ought to love God, because he first loved us. While he rejoiced in this hope, he was filled with "joy unspeakable, and full of glory." And he could not but feel for his fellow-men, who were sitting in darkness and the shadow of death. In casting his eye over the world, he beheld the greater part of mankind, bowed down in servitude and most cruel bondage, under task-masters of endless misery. He realized that a dispensation of the Gospel had been committed to him. He could say, I trust, with the Apostle of old, "Unto me is this grace given, that I should preach the unsearchable riches of Christ." Yea, I trust, that he felt indeed, that "wo was unto him, if he preached not the Gospel." We have every reason to believe that such were the facts. He saw that the "harvest was great, and

that the laborers were few." He girded on the whole Gospel armor, and entered the field of labor, willing to spend and be spent in the service of his Master. But how soon did he wear out his mortal body. His life fled away like the early cloud and morning dew.

Christ, when about thirty years old, began to preach the Gospel; and when three years had rolled away, he was put to death by wicked men. Our lamented brother commenced preaching in earlier life, but when four years had passed away, he fell by the cruel and deceitful hand of ambition. Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.

Again, in order to confirm what I have already stated concerning Mr. Pierce's conversion, from his frequent meditations on the works of nature. If you recollect, my brethren, when he first commenced preaching, he often referred you to the volume of nature, to prove the existence, and illustrate the goodness and mercy of God. All this would be very natural, when, through this medium, he had just entered the Gospel kingdom himself. Here I pass to answer an inquiry which may arise in the minds of many, *i. e.*, out of all the Christian denominations, how came he to become a Universalist preacher? An answer to this inquiry has already been hinted at. But I will now be more particular. It really seems that no unbiassed mind, which was at all conversant with the Scriptures, would make such an inquiry. But to all those who wish for information on this point, I must say, that I cannot answer you, in his own language, but I will now spend a few moments to furnish you with some Scripture proof, which undoubtedly convinced Mr. Pierce, that God was the

Saviour of all men; that he will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. Commencing with the Bible—soon after the fall of our first parents, God announced the following promise: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Now it is agreed on all hands, that the seed of the woman was Christ. I ask, why is it not just as certain that the *head* of the serpent is *sin?* Yes, it is very plain that the head of the serpent *is sin;* and God has declared that Christ (the promised seed) shall destroy it. By the fall of Adam came death. What was this death but sin; a state of alienation from God? Hear the apostle on this point. Saith he, "By one man, (not one devil) sin entered into the world, and death by sin. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God, is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now, mark what follows, by the inspired apostle. "Christ (the promised seed) shall reign until he hath subdued all things unto himself. Death, (the serpent's head,) our last enemy, shall be destroyed. For this purpose was the Son of God manifested." For what purpose? Answer, to "*destroy the works of the devil.*" Is hell the works of the devil? Most certainly. Then, according to the apostle, hell must finally be destroyed. I cannot stop to comment, but must hasten on through the Bible, only glancing upon a few passages. Gen. iii. 15: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." A bruise of the heel is painful, and much pain has sin caused mankind; but a bruise of the head is fatal, which assures us, that however great the evil caused by the serpent, that evil shall finally be destroyed,—

agreeable to the affirmation of the apostle,—"For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Again, "That through death, he might destroy him that hath the power of death, (that is, the devil.) Thus shall the seed of the woman bruise the serpent's head.

The next promise, which I shall notice, is that made to Abraham, "And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Again, "And all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him." And again, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." In about fifty years after this, the same promise was made to Isaac: "And I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham, thy father, and in thy seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed." And again, about forty years after, the same promise was confirmed to Jacob: "And in thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." These are the promises, the eternal oath of God; and upon no condition, whatever, with man.

Saith God, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah: "For as the rain cometh down, &c., so shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth; it shall not return to me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the things whereunto I sent it. There is no God with me. I kill, and I make alive, I wound, and I heal; neither is there any can deliver out of my hands. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For he knoweth our frame, he remembereth, that we are but dust; as for man, his days are as grass, as the flower of the field, so he flour-

isheth, and is no more. Then shall the dust return to dust as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it. He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell, shall not stand. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," saith God. Passing from the Old Testament to the New, I shall notice a few passages. Matt. i. 21: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Notice, "Save his people from their sins." Can there be any question who were his people? I think not; for the Scriptures affirm that all things, *i. e.*, all men are given to Christ. Hear the apostle saying, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." Now, let us ask, can Christ be cheated out of what God hath appointed him to? No. Says the apostle, "For no man liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself. Therefore, whether we live, or whether we die, we are the Lord's." And Christ himself assures us, "And I, as I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The Son of man was 'manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil, death and him that hath the power of death, (that is, the devil,) and deliver those who, through fear of death, have been all their lifetime subject to bondage." "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. He died for all. By the grace of God, he tasted death for every man. He hath saved us, and called us, with an holy calling; not according to our works,

but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Jesus Christ before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." And now, hark! the archangel sounds his trumpet, and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, all the slumbering dead arise and come forth. But how, and with what bodies do they come? Let Paul answer: "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. This corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality. As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. In the resurrection from the dead, they shall be as the angels of God in heaven. Neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels, and shall be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. Then, at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth; and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." John, in vision, saw all created intelligences fall down and worship God and the Lamb, and broke out in the following rapturous strain, "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrowing nor crying, neither shall there be any more

pain; for the former things are passed away." Now, I ask, who, in the name of common honesty, after considering the passages which I have noticed, could come to any other conclusion than Mr. Pierce did—that the Bible very plainly and fully taught the final restitution of all things? No one can doubt but this was his sincere belief. He preached it—he lived it—and he died in its glorious triumphs. And this is not all: on his death-bed he gave all his property still to be employed in its support. And now, I ask, have I not said enough, under this head, to satisfy each and every one that Mr. Pierce was converted and made a minister of the Gospel, only by the *effectual working of the spirit of God?* I trust that I have; and shall dismiss this head of my inquiry, by saying, that there are those *who will not be convinced.* They will have it, that *they have all the religion, all the piety, and all the goodness; and that they are the only favorites of God; and do frequently thank God that they are not like other men, yea, publicans, or Universalists.* As, in the days of Christ, *they are so blind that they will not see, and so deaf that they will not hear. They will not come to the light, and do not expect to heal them.*

2. What influence did the religion which Mr. Pierce embraced and preached, have on his own life? I shall now make a few extracts from his diary.

Friday, May 13, 1836, the day but one previous to his preaching his first sermon, I find the following prayer breathed out, and recorded: "O, God, guide me in the paths of virtue and knowledge. Save me from all sin, O God; while I do live, may I live to the honor of thy name; but when it seemeth good in thy sight, cause me to pass through the shadow of

death, enjoying the consolations of thy truth." This prayer God did hear and answer. Though he died in the morning of life, he was 'an hundred years old' in virtue and religion.

May 15th, 1836, I find the following: "Preached this forenoon, for the first time in my life. Text,—God is love."

Saturday, May 28th, I notice the following:—"Went to Framingham, and there attended the funeral of a young man, Mr. John Baker, at the West Meeting-house. The services were performed by Rev. Paul Dean, of Boston. Meeting-house well filled. The corpse looked very natural, particularly his forehead. With his whole countenance I was familiar, as I attended the academy with him last fall. O, it is not in the power of human speech to describe the picture of a young man shrouded in the arms of death! While looking upon the holy and pale countenance, the soul immediately exclaims, O, that the doctrine of future immortal glory is true! With this glorious doctrine before me, it seems as though I could see joy and peace upon his face. Holy Father, when it seems good in thy sight, take me from earth as thou hast him: my most anxious prayer to thee, O God, is, that I may continue to believe that whether 'I die or live, I am thine.' Give me thy salvation, which saveth from sin. Thy ways are past finding out; for I cannot see why thou hast taken one, and left another, while to both life was equally dear; but may I ever believe that thou art love, in all thy doings. O, God, may I live to thy glory, and die rejoicing in thy truth." Thus, my brethren, our lamented brother frequently prayed, and prayed in faith; for he received the blessing. And this was the happy influence which

the gospel ever had, through his whole ministry, on all occasions—in prosperity and in adversity. He was inspired with love to all mankind. His grateful soul was filled with love and admiration in reading and contemplating on the volume of nature, and the volume of inspiration. His ambition and untiring zeal in the cause of truth—his pure example of virtue and morality, which may be so clearly traced through all his life, and, especially, through all his ministry, will be handed down through generations yet unborn. The dignity and integrity of character which he sustained, as a minister of the Gospel, has erected for him a monument of praise, which will not only be spoken of, in all the churches, but will stand amid the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds. My brethren, it was the influence of the Gospel, that led him on, step by step, to higher, and higher attainments in religion. He was more and more engaged in the cause of Gospel truth. The influence of the Gospel filled his soul with zeal, which increased until he faltered under disease. His zeal never abated, until death closed the scene. But, do I hear some one saying, "False teachers sometimes have much zeal." Yes, this is true. Zeal and sincerity are no proof, I acknowledge, that they have the cause of truth at stake. Christ foreseeing that false teachers would rise and deceive many, was careful to leave a criterion whereby all his true disciples might be recognized. "By their fruit," said he, "ye shall know them"—not by their professions and long prayers. "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven." What is the character of a sincere disciple of Christ, as given in the Scriptures? I answer, it is strictly, nothing more nor

less, than virtue and morality. In a word, it is love to God, and love to man. And remember this, all the proof that we can have, or give of our love to God, is our love to each other. "If you love not your brother whom you have seen, how can you love God, whom you have not seen?" "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." Saith the apostle, "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world." And at the last judgment, (as it is called,) when mankind were called to an account, and the awful sentence pronounced, "Depart ye cursed," &c., why did they meet with the disapprobation of their Judge? The answer is, because, "When I was hungry, ye gave me no meat; when I was thirsty, ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not," &c. Now, what was this but a lack of love, virtue, and morality? of not doing as we would be done unto? There was no inquiry into their religious belief, but how had they discharged the duties of life, which they owed to each other? Had they done good to all, according to their ability and opportunity? Here is a serious consideration for those who make long prayers, and so frequently boast, "I am holier than thou; stand by thyself." But when we compare the life, the whole deportment of our deceased pastor with the criterion which I have noticed from the Scriptures, will any one presume to say, that when he is weighed in the balance, he is found wanting? I think not. However widely others might differ from him, in religious opinion, I hesitate not to say, all, of whatever order, will readily agree with me in saying that the doctrine

which he preached had a most happy influence on his life. He was never faint nor weary in well doing; but pressed forward with the greatest earnestness and zeal towards the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus our Saviour and Redeemer, until he breathed his last.

3. What was the death which he died? His death was most peaceful and happy. He died with the most firm belief in the immortality of the soul—that all mankind will finally be raised to holiness and happiness. This unwavering faith afforded him the greatest consolation in health, in sickness, and in death. His heart being enlarged with this doctrine, his death was hastened on by his unbounded zeal to reconcile the world unto God. It was his delight in health, and was as an anchor to his soul, both sure and steadfast, in a dying hour. When he saw death fast approaching, he said to those who stood around his dying bed, "Tell all the world that my faith is unshaken—I have peace with God—I have no fears to die—to go home," &c. And he was so fearful those who heard him would not remember his dying words, he says, "Write, write it down." His disease was such that he died in a moment. He only had time to say to his watchers, "*I am going.*" He died at ten o'clock, in the evening, August 31, 1840. An hour previous to his death, he conversed with his watchers about his situation, and spoke freely and calmly of life and death. All the desire he had to live, was, he said, that he might preach the Gospel more zealously. He was willing to die, if it was God's will. It was God's will, and he died as he had frequently prayed—"O, God, while I *do live*, may I live to the honor of thy name; but when it seemeth good in thy sight, cause me to pass

through the shadow of death, rejoicing in the consolations of thy truth." God did remember his prayer, and he died rejoicing in his great salvation—triumphing over death and the grave.

The Gospel which he preached, my brethren, speaks peace to us in this all-trying hour of separation. We shall all meet again. O, the rejoicing there will be, when we shall meet our lamented brother in the happy Canaan above. "Saints, angels, and men, hallelujahs shall sing." "Glory to God in the highest"—we shall part no more. I will here add,—July 24, 1836, Mr. Pierce preached his first sermon in Lunenburg. July 19, 1840, he preached his last sermon, and preached in Lunenburg. On this day, (July 19, 1840,) I find recorded on his journal the following:

"Preached in Lunenburg. Under the circumstances, could not raise any enjoyment; could not keep the thought from my mind, that my days, in all respects, are almost numbered."

July 20th, he made his last record on his journal. He says, "Last night I waked up, and found myself bleeding. As I laid with my head elevated, it was what had never before happened." After he was confined to his chamber, and bled from his lungs so frequently, his physicians did not allow him to use his hands, and of course he could no longer keep a journal. I will close this head in the language of an eminent physician, advanced both in age and practice, who attended upon Mr. Pierce to the last. Said he, speaking of him soon after his decease, "He met death with the greatest composure and fortitude of any person that I ever knew leave the world."

"Clasp'd in my heavenly Father's arms,
I would forget my breath;
And lose my life among the charms
Of so divine a death."

4. My brethren, in addressing you, I am at a loss what to say. Can I, or do I need to say any thing? Can it be that you have so soon forgotten the example, the untiring zeal, the dying request, the devout prayer, breathed out for you by your deceased pastor, on his death-bed? It cannot be. Then I have only to renew in your minds what you have so recently experienced. You have been called to endure many trials and great afflictions—in some measure almost unparalleled. But you will consider, I trust, that this is the trial of your faith. And will you not endure as faithful soldiers of the cross, doing honor to the Captain of our salvation, who will, eventually, enable you to conquer every foe, and land you safely in the happy Canaan above? I trust that you will. Through the dispensation of God's providence, you have experienced a sore trial. He who came among you, and proclaimed unto you the joyful news and glad tidings of the Gospel; he who established your faith, not in works, but according to the eternal plan and purpose of God; he who was instrumental in taking your feet from the miry clay of endless misery, and placing them on the rock Jesus Christ, the final restitution of all things; he who labored for our good, and poured out his life for our advancement in the cause of Christ, is no more! And though we hear his admonitory voice no more, can you ever forget the great sacrifices which he made for you? The wise counsel which he administered to you, while you stood by his dying-bed, O, will it ever be blotted from your memories? My brethren, how touching is the reflection. A few days previous to his dissolution, he called you to his bedside, and bequeathed to you all his earthly possessions, for the support of

that holy religion, which gave him, as he told you, so much confidence, while on the confines of eternity. My brethren, your deceased minister manifested great wisdom in making his will. He was thoughtful and anxious for your furtherance in the Gospel. He had fears, like the apostle of old, that "after his departing, grievous wolves would enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of yourselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." He therefore gave you the income of all his property for the support of such preaching as the State Convention of Universalists will approve, provided, that you raise one hundred dollars, exclusive. If you neglect to raise this sum for each year, to be expended, as above stated, you then lose the income bequeathed; and if you neglect to raise one hundred dollars annually, for five years in succession, you forfeit not only the whole right of legacy, but all the respect and confidence which your deceased pastor had placed in you. It was his anxious desire that you, my brethren, should persevere in the good cause in which you have engaged; that you should gird on the Gospel armor, and fight manfully the good fight of faith. It was his anxious desire that you should not enter into any compromise either with *popularity* or *superstition;* that you should not be seduced by sectarianists—falter in your well-begun course, and finally go back to the weak and beggarly elements of this world, and be again in bondage, under task-masters of endless misery. No, he so wisely made his will, that if you should be thus led away, his property should no longer aid you. And now, my brethren, it is yet to be seen, whether you will remember Joseph, or forget him. Whether you will follow the example of

your departed minister, or whether you will desert it. I will say, for your encouragement, remember the words of the immortal Washington, "United we stand; divided we fall." Ever keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. Consider how much one individual can do, and has done, by a firm resolution and perseverance. Now, then, if one individual can accomplish so much, twenty, in equal circumstances, can accomplish twenty times as much. Only be united and persevere, and I will insure you prosperity and happiness. If each one will only do his part, in support of the Gospel, you are able, and can have preaching one half of the time. But, on the other hand, should you dwindle away, and finally expire, you must die a miserable death. You could not, in your dying moments, but reflect upon the contempt and disgrace which you had brought upon that holy religion which your immortal brother established among you, and for which he sacrificed both his property and his life. O, my brethren, will you ever falter, and give the world occasion to say, "Your religion is vain." Though I thus speak, I hope better things of you.

I will here close this head by quoting the words of Paul to his Ephesian brethren, and adopt them as the language of your late minister: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt

about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God; praying with all prayer in supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. Therefore, watch, and remember, that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to those that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that so laboring, ye ought to support the weak; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him. Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, *that they should see his face no more.*"

5. One word to the relatives of our deceased pastor, and I have done.

Respected Friends—God, in his mysterious providence, has come nigh unto you. One who was bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh—in the morning of life, and in the midst of usefulness; one whom you held most dear, is taken from you, and put into darkness. In all your concerns of life, you see him no more. At the family altar, at the rise of

morn, and at the close of evening, he meets you no more. At the fireside and at the table of repast, one seat is left vacant; and in sorrow you reflect that he who once occupied it, will occupy it no more. And, lastly, when the returning Sabbath comes, and the bell calls us to this consecrated place of worship, he who has so frequently met with us here, and who was our spiritual guide and teacher, comes not; and again, in tears, you have to reflect that he will meet you here no more forever. No; he has taken leave of this sacred desk; of this house; of friends; of relatives; and also of earth. The last time he met us in this earthly temple, he addressed us not. No! he was shrouded in his coffin, and laid prostrate before us, cold and motionless in death. And from this place you followed him to the lonely mansion, and there beheld his body deposited in the dark and dreary tomb. And here ended the mournful performance. "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness."

And now, my dear friends, I fain would administer to you some consolation. True, you have been called to endure most heart-rending sorrow and affliction. But is there no balm in Gilead? no physician there? Does not the Gospel afford you much consolation in this your day of visitation? I trust that it does. Christ, when he came to the grave of Lazarus, wept, and so did all the relatives and friends of the deceased. But they soon rejoiced, when they heard from the lips of the Saviour, that he who was dead should "rise again." These gracious words, my dear friends, were not only spoken for the joy and comfort of the relatives of Lazarus, but for all human-kind. And while you may now imagine yourselves as standing by the grave of your departed relative, weeping, O, listen to the consoling

words of Jesus, "Thy brother shall rise again." He spake the word, and the dead came forth, to the great joy and comfort all the mourning friends. Our pastor, and your lamented relative, has gone down to the grave, and will return to us no more. Could he break the silence of the dead, he would say, "Weep not for me, but for yourselves. You must quickly follow." "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," saith God. "Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished." Christ hath burst the bars of the tomb, and ascended into heaven. He hath left for our comfort many assurances that we shall follow him. "And I, as I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." We shall all be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Neither can we die any more, for we shall be equal unto the angels. "This corruptible shall put on incorruption; and this mortal shall put on immortality. Death shall be swallowed up in victory." And all created intelligences shall spend an eternity of joy and rejoicing together. I need not multiply and repeat passages; they are all familiar to you. I have no doubts nor fears but you are rejoicing in hope, and with a firm belief of a blissful immortality. That the trumpet *will* sound, and awaken all the slumbering dead; and they shall come forth; and all kindred and friends shall be re-united to part no more. Believing that you are indeed comforted with such hopes and consolations, I close, devoutly praying that God would aid and assist us all, so to follow the example of our deceased pastor, that when we shall be called to bid farewell to earth and all its endearments, O, then may our last end be peaceful and happy like *his*. AMEN.

CHAPTER VIII.

The following is a brief history of the difficulties that Mr. Pierce had to encounter, caused by the "Evangelists" at Lunenburg.

If St. Paul fought with beasts at Ephesus, or men who were like beasts, our lamented Mr. Pierce fought with devils at Lunenburg, Mass. Yet, in all this combat, he was guided by that wisdom which is from above—he showed no spirit of retaliation—he "sinned not with his lips." Though firm and persevering in the cause of truth, he firmly adhered to the *rights* of his brethren, which were outraged and intruded upon by their unceasing opponents in his place.

Here I would refer the reader to a few facts, out of justice to Mr. Pierce.

I have already stated or insinuated that the rights of the Universalists at Lunenburg had been outraged and intruded upon. I will now state by *whom* and *wherein*. They have been outraged by a certain order calling themselves, "The Evangelical Society of Lunenburg." Their pastor is Eli W. Harrington, concerning whom I cannot use the old maxim, without reversing it. Not "like priest,* like people," but, like people, like priest. This being true, all have the same opinion of Rev. Mr. H.

Now for a few facts, as only a few can be admitted into this work. Some ten or fifteen years ago, the town of Lunenburg owned one of the old fash-

*Twice within six months the good deacons have led Rev. Mr. Harrington to particular individuals, and made him make acknowledgments, and ask forgiveness!

ioned meeting-houses, built of the oaken timber, by our forefathers; and stood, even in this generation, firmer than the cedars of Lebanon. But in this day of popularity, (prodigality,) the old house was not stylish enough for this *very pious* '*Evangelical Society*.' Well, what must be done? Why, like the dog in the manger, they were determined neither to worship in the old house themselves, nor to suffer any other society to worship there.

They, the 'Evangelists,' well knowing that the Supreme Court had decided that each pew-holder owned a part of the house and pulpit as long as the house was fit to worship in, they therefore flung open the doors, leaving the house to be used for the vilest of purposes. This not being enough, some one, in a dark, windy night, with a mallet attached to a long pole, broke in a large proportion of the glass. They then brought a committee to examine the house, who, well knowing what they were called for, decided that the house was not fit to worship in; by which means the 'Evangelists' saved paying the pew-holders a large sum of money.

After taking this outrageous and wicked advantage, like the destruction of Jerusalem, they razed the house to the ground, ("not leaving one stone upon another,") to the great sacrifice of the rightful owners. The leaders of said society enticed some of all orders in town to help build a new meeting-house. Having, as they supposed, by their vile acts, compelled all to worship in the new house, they had Rev. Ebenezer Hubbard for their minister, who was all things to all men, in such a manner, that they soon called him not '*evangelical*' enough for them. And when one year's salary (lacking two weeks) was due, these pious 'Evangelicals,' deacons and

all, except a very few who would not stoop to such vile and unjust acts, went and joined other societies. And when Mr. Hubbard wanted pay for his labors according to agreement, these 'Evangelical' leaders had become outlaws, and would never pay him one cent!! Whether they signed off from the First Parish for the purpose of cheating Mr. Hubbard out of his just dues or not, *the very sum which they themselves contracted with him for*, the reader must judge for himself. Mr. Hubbard prosecuted and attached the property of an individual, left in the parish, and he was most unjustly compelled to pay him. The land on which the new house was built, was deeded to the deacons of the church of the First Parish in Lunenburg, and their successors forever. All the deacons of the church of the First Parish at the time the deed was given, have gone over to another society, and the church have chosen others in their stead. Now, the grand question in the Supreme Court is, which deacons have the best right to the house, those that are dead, or those who have become their successors?

As to the number of pews owned between the First Parish and the dissenters, they are nearly equal.

After a few that were left in the parish had settled with Mr. Hubbard, and he had left town, these *very pious runaways* formed themselves into a new society, and were christened (as before stated) the 'Evangelical Society of Lunenburg.' Next, they came and claimed the homestead, the new meeting-house; but the First Parish were unwilling to give it up. And now, kind reader, what course do you think this very pious society took in order to get control of the meeting-house, while Mr. Pierce was

the minister of the First Parish? I will inform you. In the spring of 1838, at the annual parish meeting, P. S. Kimball, who often railed against the Evangelicals, and pretended great friendship for the Parish, was chosen clerk of said parish. He no sooner received the office of clerk, than he secretly agreed with the Evangelical Society, to betray (Judas like) the Parish into the hands of their most bitter enemies, the Evangelicals. The Legislature of the State, previous to this, had made a law, that no individual should be a lawful voter in any parish meeting, until his name had been lodged with the clerk full six months before the meeting. Agreeable to this law, Mr. Kimball, very soon after his election, received thirty or forty names of the Evangelical Society, and kept it a profound secret from the Parish, to whom he *was under oath to be faithful and true*, until the six months had expired, at which time, Mr. K. called on the assessors, and pretended that he wanted a parish meeting called, in order to make some repairs on the meeting-house, and fix it up more convenient for winter. In the warrant he was careful to insert an article, to repair said house, dispose of it, or act any thing thereon, &c. The warrant was put up—the day and hour arrived—a part only of the lawful parish came together; and, to their greatest surprise and astonishment, in came most of the *Evangelicals*, and claimed their right to vote! Mr. K. was called upon, and he affirmed that their names had been left with him *full six months previous to said meeting, with a desire to belong to the parish!!* These "wolves in sheep's clothing" then went on, (being a majority,) and voted, under said article, to sell the meeting-house, and sold it the same day, to one of their party,

who stayed back for that purpose, and did not join the parish with his brethren. They sold the house, which had not been built ten years, which cost above three thousand dollars, (with a good bell on it,) for *twenty-five dollars*, and gave a deed of the house the same day, and hurried it on record.

Thus, Mr. K., alias Benedict Arnold, (as he is now called,) sold the army (First Parish) into the hands of the British, (Evangelicals,) and they soon made their first move to get possession of the house. Mr. Stone, who purchased the house, watched his opportunity, when the keeper of the house was from home, and, (Philistian like,) he "ploughed with his heifer," and obtained the key of the house. He then, with some of his party, went early Sabbath morning, and locked themselves in, with a determination to keep the First Parish and their minister out. But, reader, there was a time when the children of Israel were commanded to "stand still, and see the salvation of God." The incident which I am now about to mention, brings this to my mind. When the hour of service drew nigh, Mr. Pierce, with some of the First Parish committee, came up to the door of the meeting-house. Mr. Stone, with his party in the house, supposing that more Evangelical soldiers had arrived, they unlocked the door, when, behold! instead of receiving a reinforcement to their army, in rushed the First Parish committee, with their pastor, and safely conducted him into the pulpit, and sat with him, on his right hand and on his left. Mr. Stone, the pretended owner of the house, at the same time joined the company in the pulpit, and remained, as if fettered and bound, not rising even for prayers; although no blame could be attached to him, as the Universalists worship a God

of all mercy and love, of course he concluded there was no need of asking any favors of him. Not so with the God of the Evangelicals; he being a God of all vengeance, it was highly necessary to do all they could to assuage, pacify, and calm his temper.

What must have been the feelings of Mr. Pierce at this trying moment, knowing, as he did, that their opponents had threatened them with lynch law. A stout man, a member of the church of the Evangelical Society, said, the day previous to this outrage, "*If the Universalists go into the meeting-house tomorrow, they will have to travel over my dead body.*"

I will further state, the Calvinistic minister came into the meeting-house at this time, and made the attempt to enter the pulpit, but was rejected by the First Parish committee. Was not this a trying hour for a youth, who had never been in battle of any kind before, in this moment of such great excitement, to rise and preach the Gospel of the meek and lowly Jesus? Yet he did it with calmness and composure—with all that self-control which ever sways the Christian's heart. Not a word of retaliation flowed from his lips, but, in the meekness and likeness of his Master, he prayed, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

I find by Mr. Pierce's journal that this doleful affair took place Dec. 22d, 1839. March following, this *pious sect* held a sham parish meeting, pretending that they were the First Parish. At said meeting they chose a committee to take possession of the house, and notify Mr. Pierce that he could not preach there any longer. They chose for this committee, William Brown, P. S. Kimball, (Benedict,) and John Howard. By referring again to Mr. P.'s journal, I find that he was notified according to vote. Friday, April 10th, he made the following record:

"Received a communication from Wm. Brown, per order, from the Evangelical Committee, professing to have been chosen *legally*, by the First Parish, to notify me to leave the meeting-house, as it is the intention of said party to use the house all the time in future."

At this time the Universalists, who were lawfully the First Parish, had procured a new lock, and held the control of the house, thus rendering the stolen key useless. In this dilemma, the Evangelicals forged a key to the new lock, which P. S. Kimball told them would pass the wards of the new lock, and remove the bolt easily. But they, knowing his character, dared not trust him, for

> He who has a traitor been,
> Is sure to act just so again.

Wherefore, in order to be sure that they should not be deceived, a number of the Evangelicals, with their agent, went at a late hour on Saturday night, to try their new key. They found that their new key worked admirably well; but, being so many, they were discovered by some one, who informed the committee of the First Parish what was about to take place. Therefore, early on Sabbath morning, the First Parish committee went, unperceived by the Evangelicals, into the house, locked, and put an obstruction into the keyhole in the inside, barred and braced the doors, so that no one could burst them. Soon after this, P. S. Kimball, with his associates, arrived. P. S. K., with a vast quantum of self-complacency, flourished his mock key, and exultingly endeavored to introduce his illegitimate child into the family; but the lock indignantly refused to admit the spurious offspring to associate with the only lawful child. P. S. K. then grew

rather wrathy, and uttered (as Rev. Mr. McClure would say) an "*Orthodox oath.*" Said he, "*Damn it! what ails it? I unlocked it quick enough last night!!!* Finding it utterly impossible to open the door in a peaceable manner, the assailants commenced a heavy and strong assault upon the three doors which led to the inside of the house, pounding, prying, and shoving, with all their strength and might, to burst in the doors; but the well guarded props and braces within presented an impregnable barrier to their entrance, and although a large reinforcement arrived, still they could not force a passage. From that time to the present, having been foiled in all their undertakings, they have suffered the First Parish to worship in said house in peace.

SERMON I.

"Recompense to no man evil for evil."—Romans xii. 17.

MAN seldom, if ever, acts without a motive. Something of sufficient importance to cause him to act, must be presented to his mind, by which, or in which, he expects to make some additions to his happiness, or, in other words, to those things which constitute his happiness.

This is a truth which all will admit; because all will say, that they do not often see persons acting without a motive, and that a person thus acting would be very inconsistent. If we should see a person laboring incessantly in some difficult work, and were ignorant of the object which he had in view, we should say to him, "Friend, what motive have you for thus laboring incessantly?" And if he should answer, "I have no motive, no object, nothing for which I labor," we should at once suppose he was either foolish or insane.

Hence, all understanding minds expect to gain something by their actions and labors. And this is perfectly right. The agriculturist tills the earth, sows his seed, and uses the means by which his store-houses are filled with the produce of the fields. What motive has he for this labor? A desire to make himself and those who are dependent on him for maintenance, glad in the enjoyment of those things which contribute to our present happiness. The mechanic and merchant have the same object in view. One labors from day to day in hope to possess in some future time more of this world's

riches. The other risks his all, that he may add to what he already possesses. The philosopher keeps his mind in action, that he may bring to light some hidden thing in the mysterious works of nature, and thereby make himself happier and more useful in the world by this knowledge. The philanthropist engages in his benevolent undertaking, that he may make himself happy in the thought that he has done his duty, in that he has made the unfortunate and degraded less miserable.

The object and motive of the philanthropist we see in the death of our Saviour, of whom it is written, "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God."

Why did Christ give himself for the world? Because of the joy that was set before him. He joyed in the thought that, by the sacrifice of himself, he should deliver the world from bondage, to which they were subject through fear of death. God had an object in view when he created all things. John, the Revelator, says, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." God took pleasure in a greater manifestation of his glory, by the creation of a multitude of worlds, and of millions of intelligent beings to live, and move, and have their existence in Him. Hence, we perceive, if we contemplate God, or the Mediator, or man, in his various stations and avocations, that a motive of action is common to them all. God's motive can be reasonably resolved, into the happiness of the beings created.

As God's happiness is infinitely immutable, it can neither be increased nor diminished. Therefore, to

benefit himself, could not have been his object in creation, but to benefit us. Consequently, when he said by his apostle, "Recompense to no man evil for evil," to benefit us was his intention in giving us this precept. And all the motives which prompt man to action can be resolved into one, and that is, his happiness. As all the things which the world can give are valueless to man, unless they make him happy, he should study to gain those things which will conduce to his happiness. And, as to do good, makes happiness, man's object should be to render no man evil for evil. As our happinesss depends upon that of others, it is difficult to do good to another without benefitting ourselves, or to do evil to any one without injuring ourselves. Therefore, all must acknowledge that the precept contained in our text is worthy of our most serious attention. "Recompense to no man evil for evil." The first view which we shall take of this subject, is the one expressed by the words of the text, "To no man evil for evil."

From time immemorial, our race have, in some degree, done evil to one another. And, even at this day, with all the lessons which we have learned from the folly of the past, by which to improve ourselves in regard to the future, we still copy their example.

Now, as the principal causes of all the misery and unhappiness which we suffer, are our follies and evils which we commit against each other, it is high time to look seriously about us, and endeavor to make ourselves better, and consequently happier. A certain degree of misery is the natural consequence of the frailty of our natures. Hence our evils are not the only causes of our unhappiness.

But, as we have just said, we can again reasonably say, that our evils are many of the causes of human woe. As happiness is the only thing which any one can wish to gain, if we are so fortunate as to prove that nothing is gained by recompensing evil for evil, we shall be inconsistent if we do not depart from it; we shall act without an object, for happiness is our object; and we have once acknowledged that if a person thus acts, he acts irrationally.

This is plain language, and our only apology is, that sin and evil are in the world, and to keep ourselves from them, we must use great plainness of speech.

But why should we not recompense evil for evil? 1. Because it is not right; it is not just. "But," says one, "when a person does evil to me, it seems just that I should return the evil." This is an error, and it is one into which we are very prone to fall. It is a melancholy truth, that when we contemplate the world, we see too much of the spirit of retaliation. To return evil for evil cannot be right, because, in the first place, it is wholly and totally wrong to do evil. Hence it cannot be right to do evil under any circumstances. It may appear that to injure one who has injured us, is not an offence of so great a magnitude as to injure one who never wronged us. Notwithstanding this, it is an offence, and even allowing that it is not so great an offence as it might be, this does not justify us in returning wrong for wrong; because the fact that one has done wrong, does not make it right that we should do wrong.

To do evil is not right, and this is the reason why we should not return wrong for wrong.

But there are other considerations why we should not thus act.

2d. We should not recompense evil for evil, because we gain nothing by it. Does this retaliatory spirit make us happier? Does it make us more useful and respectable in community? Certainly none of these things are effected by retaliation. Hence, if we gain nothing by this spirit, if we practice it we are inconsistent, as we have acknowledged, because we act without a motive.

3d. We should not thus inconsistently act, because it is our duty to improve the moral world. Now, by returning injury for injury, we can never make any moral improvement in the world. When an individual has injured us and we return the injury, what is the consequence? Is it moral reformation? No, for our injurer again has a supposed reason to continue his injuries. If we have a disposition to return injuries, we are more likely to return a greater than a less, because we see the injury, which we have received, through a magnifying glass; that is, it appears greater than it really is. And the injury returned appears the same to the injurer. Hence, he thinks that ours is greater than his, therefore he supposes it right to return another, that the account may be fairly balanced.

Therefore we see the consequence of returning evil for evil; which is, instead of soaring to the acme of human happiness and improvement, we decline into the depths of misery and wrong. We become worse and worse—more and more evil.

But, on the other hand, if we return good for evil, blessings for injuries, we shall benefit ourselves. Which receives the most enjoyment, the most self-satisfaction, he who returns evil for evil, or he who overcomes evil with good? And we shall not only benefit ourselves, but shall reform our injurer.

When we return him good, does he not stand condemned? Does he not feel that the one whom he has injured is greater and better than himself? Will he not feel that he is wicked and merits punishment? Most certainly. Hence, these thoughts will tend to turn him from the error of his ways. He cannot continue his evils unless he is the most abandoned of all creatures. Goodness and forgiveness can do much toward the reformation of the vicious, but a spirit of retaliation can do nothing; for when one is vicious, and sees the whole world arrayed against him in a roar of retaliation, he supposes all to be like himself. Hence he has no inducement to become virtuous. But if he sees himself alone evil, he will labor to make himself like others.

If one is inclined to evil, to return him good, as it were, punishes him more than to return him evil; because, when he receives good, his conscience is awakened to a sense of his own guilt. As it is said in our context, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for, in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

Perhaps some will say that we cannot at all times follow this Gospel precept, for if we always overcome evil with good, those who are evil disposed will, if they choose, continue their crimes, having nothing to prevent them. But here let us not err in regard to this Gospel precept. The Gospel does not require us to submit to what is wrong, without using means to prevent a repetition of the wrong. There is a vast difference between recompensing evil for evil, and using means to protect ourselves against evil. If we use means to make the vicious virtuous, we return them good; therefore, if we

make this distinction between recompensing evil for evil, and use means to reform the vicious, we see no impropriety in the command given in our text. The morality of the Gospel is not only the most perfect, but the plainest. The Gospel pre-supposes in the person to whom they speak, a knowledge of natural justice, of right and wrong. Hence, every duty and every offence is not particularized, for if this were done, as St. John says, "Even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

These voluminous books are not necessary; for, do we wish that every duty should be pointed out to us, that we may know what to do? Certainly not, for we profess to be intelligent beings; therefore, if we have this precept, "Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so to them," we know what to do just as well as though every thing was particularized. We have thus far contemplated our subject in reference to things between man and man. But as it is God who requires us to return good for evil, a second view of our text arises in our minds: does God recompense evil for evil? Let us examine and see.

God must have had an object in creating man, and that which he does, is and must have been his object. Therefore, if he recompenses to man endless misery, or infinite evil, this misery or evil must have been God's object or motive in creating man, because what God does, must have been his object. Consequently, if he recompenses endless misery, which is an infinite evil, he is an evil being, for if the object of a person is evil, certainly he himself is evil. If, to avoid the things proved by this syllogism, we say that this endless misery was not his

object, but that he is necessitated to recompense this infinite evil to man for a finite evil, we at the same time say God failed of accomplishing his object, because if this endless misery was not his object, something else was. Hence, if he is necessitated to recompense this infinite evil instead of that which he would, he has failed of accomplishing what he would. Therefore he is disappointed. And not only this, but we say that God had not the power to accomplish his object, for when a person is necessitated to do what he would not, it proves that he has not the power to do what he would.

Now that God should be disappointed in his object is an impossibility, for he is possessed of infinite power. Hence, he can and will accomplish just what he pleases. As he is infinitely more powerful than all his creatures; as all power which exists is derived from him, consequently he will not recompense an endless evil for evil, unless to do this was his original object and design; and no one will charge God with such a design.

We have proved that if God recompenses endless misery for evil, that this endless misery must have been his object. Now it is possible that some of us may differ from the fact, but if we go one step further, we shall agree in it, because all who believe in this endless evil, believe that it will be to the glory of God. I say all; I may be mistaken; but this is a doctrine which is taught among them. Now, if this endless evil redounds to the glory of God, it must have been his object, for it is his glory.

But we must recollect that we never have proved, and I think never can prove, that an endless evil is the glory of God. When we have done this, I will acknowledge that I am deprived of one reason for

disbelieving in that infinite evil called endless misery. My Christian friends, I just as firmly believe that God does not, and will not render evil for evil, as I do any self-evident truth. My reasons for believing this, are the following:

1. That a parent, to be consistent, must act as he requires his children to act. Now God is a parent, and he requires us in our text, to recompense *not* evil for evil. Consequently, to be consistent, he must do the same himself.

2. If a being renders evil for evil, he is himself evil. Therefore, we cannot believe that God thus acts.

3. God infinitely loves his creatures. Hence, he cannot willingly injure or do them an evil.

4. God is infinitely good; therefore he will overcome evil with good.

5. God is infinitely just; hence, he will do right. Consequently, he will not render evil for evil.

Well now, my friends, what is our conclusion? Answer: that God will not recompense endless misery to man, for it is an evil. But it may be thought by some that we have entirely failed in proving that God will not render evil for evil; consequently, will not render to any one endless misery. Because, if we have proved that God will not render evil for evil, we have proved too much, and therefore proved nothing. It is a philosophical principle, that if a thing proves too much, it proves nothing. But we will ask, wherein have we proved too much? The objector answers, you have proved that God will not return evil for evil, therefore you have proved that he will not punish us if we transgress his holy and divine law, and the Scriptures say he will by no means clear the guilty.

Most certainly we have not proved this, because punishment, used as a means to do good, is not an evil but a good. A punishment from which no good can come, is an evil. Therefore, endless punishment is an evil; but a punishment which reforms the transgressor is a good. Consequently, though we have proved that God will not recompense evil for evil, yet, we have not proved that God will not punish the transgressor, because God's punishments are good. As the apostle says, He chastens us that we may be partakers of his holiness. Now God by no means clears the guilty; and in doing this, he does not return evil for evil, because his punishments are good, and make the sinner a partaker of holiness. To illustrate, when a parent punishes a disobedient child, why does he do it? Answer: that the child may not again disobey his commands. Hence, this punishment as a means to do good, is good. Therefore, the parent does not recompense evil for evil. Consequently, by this time, it will be perceived that we have not proved too much, but just enough; that is, we have proved that God will not inflict endless misery,—because, if he does, he will return evil for evil. And, also, we have proved that he punishes all for their evils, with a punishment which is good, for it is intended for their good. Hence, he overcomes evil with good. If we believe that God is just, we must believe that he will reward us; and if we believe that he is good, we must believe that he will reward us for our good. And this I believe as firmly as I do that there is a God. Should not this belief inspire us with an unbounded love for his adorable name, and with a determined desire to live lives of holiness? Certainly, if this

goodness does not move us to action, I know not what will.

4th. The fourth view we shall take of this subject is, the consideration of the question, shall we return evil to God our father, for the good which we receive from him? We cannot here say, recompense not evil to God for evil, for we receive good from him. He is the fountain from which all good flows. We have not only received from him all our blessings, but life itself. Without his all-sustaining and preserving care, we should in a moment be annihilated. For by him we were created, and by him we are kept in existence. As God is infinitely independent, great and happy, if we return evil for his good, we do not injure him; yet this is not an excuse which we have, why we return evil for good. For when we know that we should do good to our parents, we do not think whether our actions will or will not injure them, but we are driven on to action by a holy sense of duty, by emotions of gratitude for the good which we have received from them.

And thus it is with us in regard to God. When we know that in him we live and move, and have our existence, that he is our ever present help and preserver, shall we not walk in his commandments? When we return evil to God we injure ourselves; but when we return evil to man, we injure ourselves and man. The great reason why God requires us to do good is, that it is for our good. He is ever mindful of his dependent children, and all that he has ever done, or ever will do, is intended for their good. When he said, by his apostle, Recompense to no man evil for evil, our greatest good was his object. Let us meditate upon this subject and do as becometh rational creatures. It is an

impossibility in the government of God, that a person can lose, or receive an injury, for doing good. Though we may not directly see the benefit of returning good for evil; yet it is as certain that we shall be rewarded for this act as that there is a God who rewards the virtuous. But on the contrary, if a person returns evil for evil, it is equally certain that he will receive the reward of evil. Unless we closely meditate on this subject, we shall not see all the evil of not ceasing to do evil, and of not learning to do well. When we and our friends are in health and prosperity, we may not see the evil effects of our conduct. But when misfortune, sickness, and death come upon us, then we see a train of consequences the most destructive arising from our past evils and follies. May we all be possessed of the spirit of Joseph, the son of Jacob. Though he had received evil from his brethren, yet he returned them good, whenever it was in his power to bless or curse them. Though his brethren had not in reality injured him, yet it was their intention. They should have received according to their intentions, rather than the effect of their intentions. Hence, if Joseph had returned evil for evil, he would have driven them back into the land of Canaan, there to perish with hunger, instead of giving them an abundance of things necessary to keep them in existence. He did not appear to have thought of their evils, but the holy emotions of fraternal love caused him to overcome evil with good. We will close this subject by noticing the example set us by our Lord and Master. When his disciples, James and John, said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" (the inhabitants of a Samaritan village, because they would

not receive *him, Christ,*) he turned and said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Hence, if we return evil for evil, it may with the same propriety be said of us, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."

May it not thus be said of us, but may we know that it is our duty to destroy evil. And if we would do this, we must, in the language of our context, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." AMEN.

SERMON II.

"We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."—II Cor. v. 20.

This was the prayer of that zealous and devoted man, the apostle Paul, to whose mind was made a revelation of the character of God by the doctrines of the Saviour. Through Christ Jesus he had been introduced into an understanding of the nature of that great and good Being from whom he had received life and all its natural blessings; and, in addition to these things, a happy and confiding trust in Him as a father whose nature is love, whose love is everlasting.

By the reasonable and convincing power of the religion of Jesus, he had been persuaded of the truths of Christianity. While filled with a spirit of opposition to this most holy faith, the glory of heaven's brightness shone round about him, and a voice inquired, "Why persecutest thou me?" He could not answer. The fundamental truths of the religion of the persecuted Jesus then appeared to his mind in their native goodness and excellence. He then saw that they must be the truths of the God and Father in whom he believed, and professed to worship. These sentiments, now so harmonious with the parental character, so well adapted to the wants of human beings—calculated to make them useful and happy in life, and, above all, to call them home to the Father of all goodness, in the hours of adversity, sickness, and death, there to receive the divine consolations, and thereby receive peace to their afflicted minds. He could not longer withstand

the evidence of the truths of Christianity. He could not longer oppose the meek and humble Saviour. Yes, an end of his opposition had come. He now embraced the faith against which he had fought, and enlisted himself under the banner of salvation, through the Son of the living God, and became a devoted minister of Christ, and a successful defender of the unsearchable riches of his grace. His whole soul was engaged; his joy and delight consisted in declaring the love and goodness of God, as it was manifested in his well-beloved Son. He counted all other things lost when compared with the blessings given him in Jesus his Lord; all things else vanished into nothing. He saw that this faith, and this alone, would give him happiness, consolation, and reconciliation. Hence he said to those to whom he spoke confidently and ardently, "We pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God." It appeared to his mind that this was all that was necessary; to reconcile the world unto the Father was the work which the Redeemer came and died to accomplish.

He says God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. The reconciliation of the world was all that was necessary, for the world alone was unreconciled. He remained, as he had been, firm, everlasting, and as he will remain to everlasting, the same infinitely holy, lovely, and good being, having an unchangeable love toward every creature to whom he had given an existence. He commendeth his love toward us in that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. We love him because he first loved us. His love ever extended to us. He ever felt interested in our welfare, and ever was persuaded to do us good. The Saviour could not die to reconcile the Father unto us, for he never

was unreconciled; and the apostle did not pray the Father to be reconciled, for the world was alone unreconciled. Such an harmony and reconciliation would exist as should exist if the necessary change was wrought in the creature. If the creature would love the Parent of all with the whole soul, might, and strength; would rely on the arm of his mercy through faith in a confiding trust in him, and would see that in all his doings he was parental and holy, and thereby see his salvation by which he has saved all according to his grace, and be at peace, the work designed to be accomplished through the mission of the Prince of peace would be done; and, blessed be God, it will be done, for it is the prayer of *all*. The Father in heaven desires it; the Son who gave himself, desires it; angels, and all good persons must desire it; and we have the assurance that all these holy desires will be gratified, in that it is said of Christ, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied."

Christian auditors, we have assembled upon an occasion in which the highly exalted principles of our nature must be called into exercise. We cannot, and we should not, if we could, suppress them. We cannot but feel—we cannot but sympathise—we cannot but mourn. We must partake of the sorrows of this season of deep and heart-felt grief. We cannot be so far from duty, as to be in this hour of affliction cold and indifferent. We cannot have so far departed from the influences of our profession of the Lord Jesus, as to be unmindful of its teachings. We cannot deny ourselves, for we are members one of another. Our faith commands us to weep with those who weep, and to mourn with those who mourn.

Be assured, mourning friends, that the same prayer which went from the lips of the apostle, is now ascending in the minds of these attending neighbors in your behalf to the throne of grace, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God;" and the same consoling prayer would be offered by every one, if your situation was known to them. Endeavor, then, to heed the request; Labor to let your mourning be as becometh Christian believers, for they request you (and I trust in faith you receive it) in Christ's stead be ye reconciled.

The sound of the Redeemeer's voice does not greet you, but in place of the presence of the Saviour, these sympathising friends would point you to the fundamental truths which he taught, and heaven grant that they may be received by you in Christ's stead. May they yield you the peace and consolations which they gave those who listened to the instructions of the Divine Master. Believe Christ's doctrine, and you will receive him. To him we would point you, and to him may you go; and he will direct you to his God and to your God, to his Father and to your Father. He will heal the wounded heart by a reference to the character of him who has blessed you with blessings innumerable. The character of God is dedicated upon almost every page of the record of Christ. It is the foundation upon which he built his doctrines and morals. His character is made the pattern of our imitation. Parents, and all who would do good, are referred to him, virtually saying, "Go and do likewise." He labored with all the power he possessed, to increase the hearer's confidence in the parental goodness of heaven. He endeavored to give them the impression, that those ties of affection

which unites kindred on earth, is a part of that chain of love and goodness which is linked to the Majesty on high; extending down to earth, upon which the messenger of salvation, Jesus Christ, descended and ascended, uniting all to the Father in the bond of parental love, and that this chain never would be broken, but in due time it would be gathered up into heaven, drawing all men unto him. The Saviour illustrates the providential care of him to whose care we are all intrusted, in the use of this plain and simple illustration:—"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father? Fear ye not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." Listen to the words; fear not; for if his protection is over the winged tribes of the field, and you are more valuable than they, will he not protect you? Are you not included in the arms of his preservation? Does not his mercy extend to you, and to those you love? Most certainly; for he is God to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. Upon every act which he may do in the exercise of his power, is imprinted *love*. His nature is love, and he cannot act in opposition to the principles of his nature. Evidences of his love we have in all things; and in the blessings which we have received in our lives, we see emblems of his favor. He speaks to us, in the gift of minds and hearts which desire friendship; in the language of unerring truth that he hath blessed us, and nothing save goodness will bless. I have seen in you, attentive hearers, and I now see in you, evidence of divine goodness, which comes to me in the language of certainty, that the being who hath created you is love and goodness. I can see it in the tear of sympathy—I

can see it in the act of kindness. The evidence is nigh thee, even in thy mind and in thy heart; that is, evidence of what we assert, that God is good. Would he have given you hearts to feel and sympathise, if he had not been interested in your happiness? And certainly these principles add to your happiness. Without them you could not be happy. Honor and praise him that he has given you principles which enable you to participate in the joys and sorrows of those with whom you associate. And you are not alone in the possession of this gift; it is given to you and to others. It was given to him, whose delineations of the Father's character we are now examining. While at the grave of Lazarus, though he knew that the departed was in the hands of the Father of all, he wept. The multitude seeing it, said, "Behold, how he loves him." This is the love of the Saviour, the son of God; and God's love is the same; for it is said that the son is the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory. The nature of the Father is seen in the life of Christ. He visited the afflicted, and the sick he restored to health and enjoyment, when consistent with the divine will; delivered messages of love to all, giving the healing balm of consolation to all who were bereaved, and saved the sinner from his sins and wandering. In his life there is not an instance in which he was the cause of misery. He blessed, and in these blessings is seen the character of the Father; for the son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for whatsoever things he doeth, these also doeth the son. And we not only have the blessed assurance that this harmony between the Father and son will ever continue, but we have the assurance that the love which the Father has

for us now, will continue forever. Nothing of which we can conceive, can destroy the love of the Father. This is revealed to us through the apostle. He says, "I am persuaded that angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor things present, nor things to come, nor life, nor death, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus."

Neither life, nor death, nor any thing else is able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. This assurance brings us to notice another fundamental truth made known through the mission of Christ, which we must here present, that we may be instrumental, in Christ's stead, of presenting things which reconcile the human mind; and this is life and immortality. This question, my friends, has probably been in your minds since you came within the circle of this scene of sorrow: "Are we to live beyond the valley of death?" This is a question which we can all bring home to our minds, and apply it to ourselves. And what answer shall we give? Can we answer in the negative? No; for if we do, death separates us from the love of God. We cannot conceive how he can continue to love, unless he continues, or designs to continue, in his own good time, our existence. Hence, from the nature of God, which Christ and his ambassadors give him, we have an evidence of immortality. If his nature is love, he will continue to love us, and this love will bless us. That this may be true, death will not separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. Do we realise the goodness of God which is in the Saviour? Do we see that it transcends in greatness all other evidences of love which we have in all other things? That love

which we have in the gift of temporal things, is limited to the bounds of time; but that love of God which is in the Saviour, brings to light an eternity of blessings. It is said, God so loved the world, that he gave his only son, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. This is, my friends, the love which he has for us in Christ Jesus. That goodness which prompts him to bestow upon us temporal blessings is not in the Saviour, but that goodness which induces him to crown us with eternal blessings, he has seen fit to make manifest in the death, resurrection, and ascension of the man Christ Jesus. And that we may receive the blessings of the fullness of this love, we must die; death must perform its part. Death must be endured by all who inhabit mortality. Even the Saviour himself is included among the number; for he was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. And we have the assurance that he partook of the sufferings of death willingly; for it is written of him, that he gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. And we have the happy assurance that he has not given himself in vain; for all will be ransomed, in that it is written, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Glorious truth; receive it one and all, for it will increase your faith in the impartiality of him who is the author of death and life. You will see his love in all his doings; in giving life, and in permitting death. We died in Adam, that we may

live in Jesus. In this we can see that the Parent of mercies "wounds to heal, afflicts to bless."

Mourning friends, these are the doctrines we believe, and they are in harmony with every devout and benevolent mind; they are in perfect unity with the character of him whom you should trust; and they are the truths of the religion of Jesus. We present them to you in his name, hoping they are words fitly spoken, appearing like apples of gold, in pictures of silver, yielding you the consolations of the Gospel, and in presenting them, we believe that we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God.

Parents, one of your number has been taken, but others are left. They are yours while the Heavenly Parent permits them to remain partakers of the mortal natures. Remember, that although you can call them yours, they are his. Know that he has the first claim upon them, and that when he calls, you should willingly permit them to obey. And may you know that this call is from the voice of him who can and will do infinitely more for the departed loved one, than it were possible for you to do. Believe, my friends, that it is he who doeth all things well that hath done this. He is the same when he giveth as when he taketh; unchangeable; good. He is not fallible, therefore he cannot err. All his acts harmonize with the parental affections, and the end to be accomplished by all the dispensations of his providence, is the greatest good of his creatures. Believe these things, and remember, when we entreat you to be reconciled to God, we ask you to be reconciled to a being who has done right, and that this loss of your daughter is for the best. He would have you happy; the Saviour

would have you believe; those that sympathise, would have you mingle your sorrows with consolations, and above all, remember that the faint and dying will of the departed is as if now yet heard by us, saying, "Kind friends, do not mourn for me; be reconciled."

May your faith in Christianity remain, and be a light illuminating the hours of your declining years, even telling you that your departed daughter is among the ransomed of the Lord, and that she will come to him, repeating the song of redeeming grace, having received the gift of God, the immortal crown.

Sisters and brothers: one of your number has fallen, but remember that not even a sparrow falleth unnoticed by the Father, and that your sister is more valuable than they. Fear not, therefore, for he to whom she is most valuable, will save her from all harm. Be assured that she hath fallen, to arise at the resurrection morn, when the Redeemer shall prevail, and become victorious. It is hard to bid adieu to one beloved, but you should do it, having a hope that it is only for a season, believing that you will meet again; again greet your sister with an affection far exceeding that yet realized. Reflect upon past enjoyment, and whatever you have seen in her that was good, go and do likewise. Imitate her virtues, and be happy in the thought that she has been blessed, not by the laying on of the Saviour's hands, but by the gift of himself for her and all.

All others, who are relatives; we recommend you to him who is able to give you all needed assistance in this hour of mourning. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, in believing that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy

Spirit; which faith will make you rejoice with joy unspeakable.

My young friends; you, whose lot it has been to associate with the one who has left us, I trust that you participate in this loss. Your enjoyment is lessened, your areas of friendship are severed. No more are you to be favored with the presence of one who has added to your happiness, and mingled with you in the social circle, and partook of the innocent and pleasing recreations of youthful life. That hand that has been extended to you in love, is now cold, and lifeless. That countenance, which has smiled with benevolence and gratitude, has changed, pointing us to the contrast between what we are and what we shall be. That voice, which has united in singing the song of Christian worship, has ceased its melody, and the place which she filled among your number, is left vacant. Only a few months past she was as we are, hoping for many years of usefulness, and many hours of pleasure. These hopes are now suppressed, and free from disappointment. May these thoughts duly profit us. May they teach us that our lives are not our own, but that they are his who gave them. May we ponder the paths of our feet, (that is,) daily walk circumspectly. Let all our actions be founded on the everlasting rocks of virtue.

And, finally, may we deem it our duty to covet earnestly, and to openly profess the truth which makes us happy and virtuous in life, and in the hour of departure gives peace. Heaven grant that it may be our happy lot to look forward in faith to the time when we shall meet the Saviour.

"Whose own soft hand shall wipe the tears
From every weeping eye,
And pains and groans, and griefs and fears,
And death itself shall die."

SERMON III.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath established death, and hath brought light and immortality to light through the Gospel."—II. Timothy i. 9, 10.

THIS is one of the many quotations which can be made from the New Testament, from which we may know what is truth in regard to man's immortal existence. In the Scripture just read, is contained the subject of immortal salvation. Here is the whole subject. It is not merely mentioned, leaving the student of Christianity to form his own opinion of its nature. But the subject is here introduced and explained in all its parts. The subject is finished and complete; and it is done in such a manner that we can all understand it. Every point of the whole subject is pointed out, hence we perceive and know the truth of all the parts. Light is given, and by this light all is made plain. The vail of darkness is removed; for it does not leave us in ignorance. It does not tell us that we are saved, and not by whom or what we are saved. Neither does it inform us that we are saved, and not what this salvation is. No; but on the contrary, it informs us, who is our Saviour, and the cause of the salvation, and the means by which the salvation is accomplished; and finally, the nature of the salvation. Now if this be true, and it is, as we shall perceive when we shall have gone through with the several parts of the subject contained in the text, it is indeed strange that any one who reads, thinks

and endeavors to understand for himself, should be in doubt in regard to this subject. I say it is strange that any one with such plain scripture testimony, should be in doubt, not knowing whether his immortal salvation is in his own hands, or in the hands of his God. Or in other words, whether it be in consequence of his own merit, or in consequence of the grace of God.

But I am of the opinion that all this doubt, all this want of decision, is in consequence of too much inattention to the subject; and this inattention causes the world to blend all the salvations spoken of in the gospel into one, and thereby the subject is made dark and difficult. It is made dark because we cannot understand it; and it is difficult because, if we refer all the passages speaking of salvation to *one* salvation, these passages contradict themselves. But if we make the distinction which the Scriptures make, all is harmonious, all is understood, and hence all is believed.

When we read, "Do this and you shall be saved," we know the salvation spoken of, is according to our works; but when we read, "By grace are ye saved," not of works, then we know that the salvation spoken of, is according to grace.

We must make this distinction; for it is written, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." And certainly if this salvation be a work of our own, it is not in consequence of the favor of God. And if we say that this salvation, which is of works, is the only salvation spoken of in the Gospel, we at the same time say that all the passages which say that salvation is the gift of the grace of God, are mere words without meaning. If you study the Gospel with that attention which its importance

claims, you will perceive that there are two salvations in the system,—that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

1. There can be no doubt of this, for it is written, "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil." "But glory, honor and peace to every man that worketh good." Here is peace and happiness for those who do good, and misery for those who do evil. Here is a salvation to be gained by our goodness. It is a reward, for it is of works. This we know to be true. Happiness and goodness are inseparably connected, and misery and evil are as nearly related. Avoid sin, and you will be saved from sin. This is the salvation dependent upon works. And this is a salvation which we enjoy now in this life, the moment we turn from sin. Heaven and peace to every man that worketh good. We must in this sense save ourselves. In this sense we may say man is his own saviour; and in this sense we would call upon you and the world to save yourselves. Save yourselves from the consequences of sin by avoiding sin. Save yourselves from doubts and fears, by a confiding trust in the unchanging and impartial goodness and benevolence of God. Save yourselves from the terrors of death, by a belief in a happy immortality; evidence of which we have in the death and resurrection of the man Christ Jesus. But were we to call upon you to save yourselves from any thing, and then claim heaven's endless bliss as a reward for what you have done, we should deem this a call which we are not authorized by Scripture to make.

2. We may notice the salvation to heaven, where God resides, which is the other of the two salvations which we have said are revealed in the Gospel.

And we may here inquire, why are we not authorized by the Scriptures to call upon men to save themselves from endless destruction? Because of one of the best of reasons: God is our Saviour in this respect. God, who is most able, has done this work. It is God who will save us, and bless us with eternal blessings in heaven. This is the truth contained in the text, and hence we now pass to a particular examination of the same.

1st. Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling. Here the apostle confesses that God is his saviour, for he had saved him and those to whom he wrote. The nature of this salvation we shall show when we shall have come to that part of the text which shows what it is.

Under this division of the subject, we are to show that God is the author of the salvation here mentioned. It is here plainly spoken that God hath saved us. None will deny, therefore, that God is the saviour of all who are included in this pronoun *us*. Hence, it is certain that God is the saviour of some, and all must believe this. Remember this, for it proves universal salvation. But you inquire, Is this true? Does the fact that God saved us or any one, prove that he will save all? Most certainly, if he be impartial; and that he is impartial, must appear as certain as the fact that he exists. Prove to me that God has saved one of his creatures, that he has not, or will not save, in the same manner, all, and I will prove to you that God is partial. If he be impartial in his favors, what he has done for one, he has done, or will do for the whole. If this be true, (and it is as he hath saved us,—those mentioned in the text,) he will in like manner, save all mankind. If this be true, why did not the apostle

say, Who hath saved and called all men. Because this would have been unnecessary; for reason, and every idea of those to whom Paul wrote, which they could have of a God of impartial grace, would cause them to suppose that if God was their saviour, he certainly was the saviour of all. Suppose that an angel should descend from the regions of immortality, and should appear before us, and should make us rejoice, by uttering these words, "God hath saved us," which should we infer from this happy message, that God hath saved none save us, or that he hath saved all who need salvation? Could we think that God would be so partial to the audience as to save them and not all others? Could we possess a spirit which would cause us to suppose that we were such peculiar favorites of heaven? Would not the influence of the doctrine of the renunciation induce us, as it did Paul, to make intercessions for all men, that this salvation might be bestowed upon all equally as it is upon us? And could we feel as grateful to him, seeing that he was thus partial to us, as we should be if we knew that he would be just as good to all others? It is certain that truly great minds could not be as grateful to one who bestows favors on self alone, as they would be if the favors were impartial; for it is impossible for one who is possessed of true greatness and excellence of soul, to be grateful to, and admire a benefactor to the greatest degree possible, though he may be good to us, if he be not equally good to all?

But why reason this point? We will not any further, for it is superfluous; and it is unnecessary, because the apostle told Timothy, in his first letter, and in the *several verses has told us*, that God is not only the saviour of us, but of all men. Paul said, in this

first epistle, "We trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all, especially of those that believe."

This is enough. What more can we ask? Nothing: for it is here declared, that the living God, who hath saved us, is the saviour of all men; and hence he has or will save all, because for him to be the saviour of all men and not save all, is impossible.

2d. What is the cause of this salvation? Or, in other words, why hath God saved us, and why will he save any one? Or in consequence of what is this salvation? To answer this question correctly, is highly important. To know whether the cause is on our part, or on the part of God, is what we all desire; for if our salvation depend on so frail a foundation as ourselves, we should know it; and if it depends upon the favor of God, we should know it, that we may rejoice, and ascribe to him the honor. Reason informs us that it must be the goodness and love of the Heavenly Parent which induces him to save us. It must be his unmerited favor which is the cause of our eternal salvation. We can conceive of nothing save this, which is able to bestow upon us such an infinite blessing. Is it possible for us to have so high an opinion of our own goodness, as to think that we merit an endless heaven of happiness? Can we conscientiously claim heaven as a reward for the very little good done by us in this short life? It would seem impossible to claim a moment's existence as a reward for what we have done, and much more impossible, an eternity of existence. Yes, my friends, I know that my present being is not a reward for any thing which I have done, and I can say, in sincerity, that if God should remove me from existence, this act would be just. What I mean is, I do not merit a moment of happiness. Therefore,

as far as my merit is concerned, nothing is due to me. As a reward, God is not under obligation to give any future happiness. Notwithstanding this, he is under obligation to provide for our well-being, and this obligation has its origin in the parental character. God is our father, and this relationship is what puts him under obligations to, and is what alone will cause him to provide for our endless happiness. Nothing save the goodness of God can secure for us immortal salvation. This alone can or will do it; and I will add, praised be his name for the truth. This goodness hath done it. Yes, it is the love of God which is the cause of our salvation. Hear the proof. "Who hath saved and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." Here is the truth, my friends. Not according to our works, but *according* to his *own* purpose and grace.

Can any one be in doubt, not knowing whether we are to arrive in heaven by our good works, or by divine favor? Can we still inquire, will the happiness of heaven be bestowed upon us as a reward, or as an unmerited gift? It must be a gift, for it is not in consequence of our works, but in consequence of God's own purpose and *grace.* If it was in consequence of our works, it would be a reward, but as it is in consequence of God's favor it is a gift.

How harmonious is the language of the text with parallel passages on this subject. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any one should boast." Our text informs us, that according to divine purpose and grace are ye saved. How harmonious this sentiment with this testimony, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his *will,*

according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him."—Eph. i. 9, 10.

3d. By what means will God accomplish this salvation? How will he finish this work of reconciliation? How will he gather together in one all things? Answer: by his Son, the mediator. Who hath saved us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began. This answers the question, how can all men be saved? It is by a salvation of God; by a purpose of heaven; by grace which was given us in the Saviour Jesus Christ before the world began. This is how all will be saved. For the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands. The Father hath given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. This is the Father's will. That of all thou hast given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to save that which was given him; to save that which was in a lost condition before it was given him. To God we can look as our saviour, because he has given us salvation in his Son; his grace gave it us; secured it for us in Christ before the world began. And we can look to Jesus as our saviour, because he will save all that is given him. He says, all the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. He will finish the work; it will be completely done; and in the accomplishment of the work he will rejoice. To carry on the work of the restitution

was his joy and his delight. He says, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish the work. To do the will of the Father, whose will is that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, was the Saviour's work. And the goodness of his mind, the benevolence of the spirit which was in him, will not suffer him to rest till the work be accomplished.

His joy will not be full, his happiness will not be complete, he will not see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, until all his all that were given him by the grace of God, are gathered into heaven. This is the foundation upon which our salvation rests. It was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; and if it be in Christ Jesus, is it not in good hands? Shall we not look to him as the saviour of the world? Shall we not trust in him? Shall we not look to mount Calvary for a reception into heaven? We will—we must, for it is he that hath redeemed us.

Tell us that we are not included in the ransomed of the Lord, that God is not our saviour, that we are not saved according to his grace, that our salvation is not secured in Jesus, that we are not given him, and we have no assurance of heaven, of endless blessedness, of immortality. We cannot rely upon our own goodness, because it is a broken reed. Our merits are already rewarded, and hence our claim for future good has become void.

But in God we hope. We trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began.

4th. Are we sure that this salvation of our God is what we have declared it to be, salvation from mortality to immortality? Are we certain that we know the nature of the salvation here explained in the text? Do we know whether this salvation is confined to this life, or whether it extends into heaven, and be as lasting as heaven? We think so; for this portion of the text makes known to us the truth on this point, "But is now manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

From these words we learn the nature of the salvation, the author of which is God, and hence, we may say he hath saved us. We say the salvation which is contained in the text is an immortal and endless one; or, in other words, it is the gift of the happiness of heaven.

This salvation is a resurrection to immortality, in which Christ says we shall be equal unto the angels of God, being the children of God and of the resurrection. It is happiness in a future state which is the salvation here mentioned, by which God has saved us, according to his grace, which was given us in Christ even before we existed. It is inquired, Do we know this, and therefore can we speak thus positively? Yes; we may say that we are certain of this, because this salvation was made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light. The evidence which we have that Christ abolished death and made known immortality, is the Saviour's resurrection from the grave. The apostle began the subject by saying, God hath saved us according to his grace, which was given us in him who arose

from the power of death. Now this was all truth from the foundation of the world. It was true that God had secured for us in his Son, by whom he made the world, an immortality. But all this glorious news was not made known to man till Christ made it known or manifest by the abolition of death, and by this abolition brought life and immortality to light: I say, brought life and immortality to light. Hence, this was the salvation which God hath given us in his Son; for this salvation was made manifest by his appearing, and nothing save life and immortality was brought to light by the abolition of death, and therefore this life and immortality is the salvation with which it is here said God hath saved us. My friends, mark the language of the text, for it is important that we should know upon what our hope of heaven rests. We should know by whom and by what it is that we are to receive the immortality of heaven. Remember these truths.

1. Who hath saved us,

2. Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace,

3. Which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

4. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

A resurrection to life and immortality was not known before the advent of the Son of God, for it was brought to light through the Gospel. The Gospel of the blessed God revealed the glorious message which angels first delivered: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people, for unto you is a Saviour born."

"He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet, and the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed, and God shall be all in all." This is what the Saviour is to accomplish. All are to be subject unto God, that he may be all in all. This, our God, is to be all in all, who hath saved us by his grace given us in Christ Jesus. All this is made manifest by the appearing of the Saviour, and by the abolition of death, and by the glorious doctrines of the Gospel—eternal life, immortal joy in heaven. It is to God we are to look for heaven, through Christ Jesus. In him alone we hope for justification—for salvation. Let the truths of the text increase our confidence in God, for he hath saved us, not on account of our merit, but this salvation is an unmerited gift. It is his goodness, it is his love which hath done this. It is the blessing of his favor. It is according to his grace given us in the Redeemer. These are the truths of our God; and in these we may believe, in these we may rejoice, in these we do hope, which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, entering into that within the vail, where the forerunner hath entered, carrying captivity captive, and giving gifts unto men, and whither we do by faith enter, which faith we have in our Lord and Saviour, who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light, which is secured for us by our God, who hath saved us in Christ Jesus.

And for his goodness praised and glorified be his name forever and ever.—AMEN.

SERMON IV.

"God is love."—I Epistle of John, iv. 16.

THERE is not written in the Scriptures a more glorious truth than this, "God is love," or one that is calculated in a greater degree to make man happy, and obey his Creator. The intention of God's revelation to man is, to make us happy and obedient, or in other words, to save us from the rewards of unrighteousness by entreating and causing us to obey him in righteousness; hence this truth that God is love, is the first to be believed, in order for us to be saved from the consequence of sin, because we cannot love and obey God unless we believe that he is possessed of love. For we cannot reasonably suppose, that a child would love its parent, if the child thought that the parent consisted wholly of hatred or anger, instead of love and goodness. And so it is with us in regard to our love to our heavenly Parent; hence the love of God cannot be too much discussed, known and taught among mankind.

I have made an introduction of this kind, because it is sometimes said by our Christian friends, who differ from us in religion, that the believers in universal salvation are continually preaching and writing upon the love of God. And we are not ashamed of this accusation, for the love of God is certainly the foundation of a Christian's belief and life.

We are commanded to be perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect; hence, if he does not

love, we must not; but if he does love, we must love, as he loves, in order to be perfect as he is perfect; therefore, a knowledge and belief in God's love is the foundation of a Christian's life. The convert from paganism or infidelity should first know, that our God is love, and hence he will have the greatest inducement to believe with pleasure. The pagan should be told that, instead of kneeling before a god of wood or stone, that he should worship his Creator, who is infinite and unchangeable in love. We should kindly persuade the unhappy infidel that his soul-chilling system is not the truth, by showing him the unlimited love of God, as it is manifested in the things which he hath made. And then, if there are any who still remain in unbelief, they will at least hope that our God of love really exists. And, moreover, we cannot expect that a person, who disbelieves the existence of any God, can be made to hope or believe in a God, whose nature is not love and goodness.

But it is not our design at this time to prove the existence of a God and creator of all things, but to contemplate one of his most important attributes.

1. We shall speak of God's love.
2. Of the doctrine opposed to his love.
3. Of the doctrine which agrees with it.
4. Of our duty to God, and the reason of it.

To the Christian, the mere assertion of the Scriptures, that God is love, is sufficient proof. But this is not the only proof, for there are two ways by which we can satisfy our minds upon this subject, viz.:

1st. By God's direct revelation to us.

2d. By the things which he hath made.

We have the Scriptures, and know that they are

given us for our happiness and instruction. What caused our Father in heaven to reveal himself through his Son to men, and thereby raise them from the degradation and laborious worship of idolatry, to the happy worship of the Lord God eternal? What caused him to send his Son into the world to save mankind from their sins, and the consequences of sin, by enabling man to learn of Christ his ways and righteousness? What caused him to give us the hope and consolation which we have by believing that we are not ephemeral beings; that is, that we are to exist but a short time, and then to be driven into endless nonentity; but that our present life is only the beginning of our existence in his presence? Was it to reward man for something which he had done?

Most certainly not; for he was estranged from all heaven-born truths and works. But it was God's free and unchangeable love for his creature, man, which caused him to bestow upon his children so great a blessing. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whomsoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. (John iii. 16, 17.

Such was the love of God, which induced him to send his Son to save mankind from darkness and sin, that they might not perish, or receive sin's just recompense of reward and condemnation. What this condemnation is, we learn from the words which immediately follow the Scripture just quoted. "He that believeth in him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the only begotten Son of God. And

this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."—Verses 18, 19.

Is there a Christian who does not perceive that God is love, in the means used to raise us from darkness and doubt concerning our present life, and that we might know him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, whom to know is life eternal? Who, that has seen the consolations which the sincere believer enjoys in the hour of dissolving nature, does not acknowledge that God is love, for these consolations were given by him through his Son?

God is love; it is his nature: he is infinite in this attribute, and his works clearly demonstrate this truth. We know that creation exists, and that we have an existence, but where shall we find a cause for this and all our blessings? It is the love of God. It was love which called into being the sun, our earth, and all the other planets, which around the sun revolve in perpetual circuit, harmony, and grandeur.

Behold the glories of the rising sun: view him in his daily course, even to his going down, the source of light and heat, without which barrenness and desolation would cover the earth. Behold the moon as she comes forth in her journeyings, a bright emblem of her Author's love and goodness. Walk forth in the night time, and see the innumerable host of stars; contemplate the face of the earth, which ever yieldeth an abundance for the sustenance of that being, man, who is lord of this lower world; see the falling showers, which water the earth as it hath need. Perfect order pervades the whole, and every part performs the beneficial purpose for which it

was designed; hence the love and goodness of God are proved by his works,—things which are seen.

Love exists in man, though in him it is not infinite, but finite. Man cannot with pleasure see his fellow creatures suffer; he makes known his love by endeavoring to deliver his fellows from their sufferings. Parents love their children, and brothers love brothers, and mankind love each other; but God is the fountain from which all this love proceeds,—for man is from God. We cannot turn our eyes in any direction, and not read that God is love, for it is legibly written in the strongest language on all things which show the handy work of the Almighty. Every part performs some good and great purpose; hence we need no plainer proof,—because, if God is not love and goodness, good and great things would not proceed from him.

If God had been hatred or anger, he would have made our senses so many sources of pain, instead of what they really are, so many causes of enjoyment. Instead of the pleasure which we now enjoy in walking upon the beautiful fields in happy contemplation, we should have been so formed, and things would have been so adapted to our natures, that we should constantly step upon thorns, filling us with pain. But this is not our condition. Therefore, let us declare God's love in word and in deed. Every man should write it on his heart, and so live that all can read it in his actions. Upon every monument which is reared to perpetuate the memory of any human events or beings, should be written, "God is love," so that when man reads concerning the once living, he may constantly keep in mind, that "God is love," of whose love man is a living monument.

But it may be unnecessary to say more in proof of God's love, for no Christian directly denies it.

2. Therefore we will speak of the prevalent doctrine which stands opposed to this truth, "God is love." We may look at God with the eye of mere speculative belief, and think that he is love, and hence receive joy and satisfaction in believing; but if we at the same time look at his doings towards his creatures, and perceive that no love is contained in these doings, all our joys and pleasures received from our speculative belief, are mixed with doubts and fears concerning his goodness and love. We immediately discover a plain contradiction between our belief of his nature, and our belief of his doings, because we suppose that the doings of infinite love, must be good, and hence are intended for good.

Therefore, we immediately and necessarily think, that God is not love, or that what we have believed to be his doings, is not the truth. But it is our good fortune to believe that God is love, and that all his doings are in perfect harmony with this glorious truth. We cannot believe that God is love, unless we suppose that his doings are founded in love; and they are not founded in love, unless they are intended for a good effect. To illustrate, we will suppose that we have heard that a certain man is an exceeding good and lovely parent; but we know that he often inflicts upon his children a punishment which does not, and cannot, in the least benefit them. Knowing this fact, what should we say upon hearing this good report of this man? We should say that this report cannot be true, for we have sufficient proof to the contrary in the known character of the man. And thus it is in regard to our

heavenly Parent. It is written in his revealed word that he is love, and we are told by our opposing friends, that God will doom some of his creatures to endless suffering, which punishment is not good, and cannot be intended for good. Now which should we believe,—that God is love, or that he will inflict this punishment?—for we cannot believe both, because it is impossible for God, who is infinite in love, to hate, or to do that which will injure, or not benefit his creatures.

But we should not have our minds fixed upon this subject without an examination. We should examine and learn whether the doctrine of endless misery *is* or is *not* opposed to the love of God. Therefore let us portray to ourselves one of God's creatures, cast by him into insufferable torments, there to weep and welter in misery throughout the interminable ages of eternity, there to cry for mercy, but never to receive it. Let each of us ask, Is this punishment agreeable to the love of God? Does he show that he loveth by this act? Is the poor sufferer ever to receive any benefit from his situation? Is there in all God's creation another being, who ever will receive any good in consequence of the eternal wretchedness of this one miserable creature? We cannot avoid answering, no. But it may be said by our friends who differ from us, that this out-cast had disobeyed and sinned against God. Very true;—and this is what we suppose; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But this is no proof that ceaseless suffering is agreeable to the love or justice of God.

To illustrate this more fully, we will suppose that we know an earthly parent who has a number of children; one of this number disobeys his com-

mands; he perceives the disobedience, and because the child has disobeyed, and for no good purpose, he punishes him until death delivers him from his hands. Can any one say, that this parent is love, or that he manifests any love or justice in the infliction of such unmerciful punishment? All who possess love must answer, no.

Now this punishment which the child receives from this parent, is nothing, in comparison with that which the being, doomed by God to never ending woe, suffers. Hence we must perceive that endless misery is not in accordance with the love of God; because, that punishment may be agreeable to love, it must be for the good of the punished. Can endless misery be for the good of the sufferer? No; because there is not any time after it in which he can receive any good from it. He is always to suffer; hence he cannot receive any benefit. Therefore, we believe that this horrible doctrine is not agreeable to the love of God, or that he can love in inflicting it.

This is a subject which is worthy of much candor, and should be meditated with a desire to learn the truth; because it is a revealed truth that God is love, and that he loves in all his doings. And it is not giving God that praise which is due him, if we say he is love, and that his doings do not partake of his nature. But this we do virtually say, if we believe that he dooms his creatures to endless wretchedness.

No one denies the infinity of God's love, when he contemplates him as the creator and governor of all things; and for his love to be infinite it must extend to all. When God's love ceases to extend to all, it becomes finite or limited. But this change cannot be effected, for God is unchangeable. It was through the infinitude of his love that he called into

being all his creatures; and his unchangeableness is incontrovertible proof that his love will endlessly extend to all. But, in what manner does it extend to that being who is destined to endless despair? This question never can be answered. Let us walk forth upon the beautiful hills, and there behold the infinite and universal love of God. All as far as the eye can extend declares his love. We behold with admiration and gratitude the glories of creation, and exclaim, how good and holy must he be who made and governs the whole! While here, let us soar into the regions of heavenly bliss, there to participate in the perfections and happiness of heaven. Love and goodness here are our blessings. But within our increased and perfected vision, we behold in the abyss of endless destruction the agonies of those who were endeared to us and like us imperfect on earth. In which does God bestow the most love. But it is our happy lot to believe that no one will ever witness such a scene with God in heaven.

3. We are to speak of the doctrine which is in agreement with God's love. Having shown that endless punishment is not in agreement with God's love, it is necessary to bring forth a doctrine, which is, inasmuch as our subject would be incomplete, if we did not; and hence some would have an occasion to ask, if endless punishment is not agreeable to the love of God, what doctrine is? To this question we answer, that doctrine which teaches that God punishes for the good of his creatures.

God is the father and preserver of us all. We are his children, and stand, to him, in the same relation in which children do to their earthly parents. His parental protection will ever be exer-

cised towards us both in time and eternity. But how can he punish or reward his creatures in love for their disobedience? Answer,—by bestowing that punishment which is according to their deeds, and will promote their welfare.

Let us listen to the Scriptures on this point. "Who will render to every man according to his deeds."—Rom. ii. 6. "For the Lord will not cast off for ever: but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."—Lam. iii. 31—33. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."—Heb. xii. 11.

There could be no language which would express more clearly than these portions of Scripture, that God's rewards and chastisements are founded in love, and are bestowed for the good of those who are exercised thereby. For he doth not willingly chasten, but that we might be partakers of his holiness or receive the peaceable fruits of righteousness. For illustration, suppose an earthly parent, whose children have done evil, and disobeyed his commands; the parent, in all wisdom and love, inflicts that punishment which will cause them not to disobey again. Now it is perfectly manifest that this parent exercises just as much love toward his children, in the infliction of this punishment, as another parent who gives to his children food and raiment for the promotion of their health; for he inflicted these punishments for his children's benefit, that they might be partakers of what is good and right, and that they might in future act agreeably to

his wishes and commands. This is the manner in which God punishes his children. He does it, not because he has the power, or because it is his delight, but because his punishments are necessary to prevent transgression. The moment that we say that he does punish, or that he ever will punish, his creatures, with a punishment which is not for their good, we also say that he is destitute of a father's love and kindness, and that he punishes, simply because he has a disposition to do it.

St. Paul says that love is the fulfilling of the law. This is positive proof that all the punishments which God will inflict, in the exercise of his law, will be inflicted in love, for love is the fulfilling of the law.

It may most reasonably be asked, if God, in the exercise of his law, will doom to endless suffering a part of his creatures, in what manner can love be the fulfilling of the law? For certainly there is not any love bestowed on those who are judged by the law, unless dooming them to ceaseless destruction is loving them.

But if we believe that all God's punishments in the exercise of his government and law, are intended for our profit, we immediately perceive that love is the fulfilling of the law; because, in love the penalty of the law is inflicted, that we may receive the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and become partakers of God's holiness. O, who can express the unbounded love of God? Who can measure the unlimited extent of his goodness; or, who can comprehend the unsearchable riches of his grace? Most assuredly, no one. For he sways the sceptre of his power among the armies of heaven and earth. He extends the dominion of his goodness to the utter-

most parts of his creation. By the law of his unchangeable love, he impartially rewards and blesses. "O, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever." For he hath promised, willed, purposed and confirmed it by an oath, that he will give us an existence with him in ineffable glory. Hear his words: "Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." (Acts iii, 25.) "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." (Heb. vi, 13, 14.) "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, *even* in him." (Ephesians, i, 8, 9, 10.)

4. What is our duty, being the children of infinite love? We should love God and his creatures; and the reason why we should do this, is, because he is love. This is the holy and glorious incentive, which should ever inspire us with emotions of gratitude and praise to our God, for his unspeakable goodness. It is love which should prompt us to a strict performance of the duties and virtues of life. It is love to our heavenly Parent, which should cause us to be zealously affected in the establishment of the kingdom of Christ in the earth, by our exertions in the propagation of this truth, "God is love," and thereby make all men love God, because he loves them.

It was this principle of the soul which caused St. John to be zealous in his exhortations and exertion to spread a knowledge of Christ. And may we learn his words, and by them be persuaded to live good and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty. For he says in the chapter of our text, "We love him because he first loved us."

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known, and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

And now Christian friends, to bring our remarks to a conclusion, we need only say that, to imitate God and declare his love, and thereby prove that his love dwelleth in us, we must do as he does, love as he loves. And we have seen and do testify, that he loves and does good to all, for "God is love." AMEN.

SERMON V.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead."—I Cor. xv, 42.

The learned and excellent Adam Clarke, very justly remarks, at the close of his commentary on the chapter from which the text is taken, that "the doctrine of the resurrection appears to have been thought of much more consequence among the primitive Christians than it is *now!* How is this? The apostles were continually insisting on it, and exciting the followers of God to diligence, obedience and cheerfulness through it. And their successors in the present day seldom mention it. So apostles preached; and so primitive Christians believed. There is not a doctrine in the gospel on which more stress is laid; and there is not a doctrine in the present system of preaching which is treated with more neglect." In this quotation, no cause for the error to which the Doctor alludes, and seems to deplore, is given; but he appears in doubt upon that point, as it is implied by the question, "How is this?" *i. e.*, Why do the present professed preachers of Christianity speak with so much indifference upon the important doctrine of the resurrection?

To our mind, the cause of the disparity between the preaching of the apostles and that of those whose practice the Doctor condemns, is discoverable from the difference of sentiment entertained by the primitive Christians and by those in modern times, concerning the object which Christ came to effect. A majority of the ministers, with whose labors Dr. Clarke was familiar, contended that the purpose of

Christ's mission was to reveal to man the supposition that the soul is exposed, if not already doomed, to an unlimited degree of misery, to be inflicted in a future state, as the penalty of the Divine Law; and that the principal work designed to be accomplished by his death was, to deliver the spirit from that supposed deserved punishment; hence kindred ideas, and not the resurrection, were the themes of their discourses.

But the early believers, we shall conclude, if we are permitted to judge from their writings, meditated the design of the Saviour's advent in a very opposite aspect. They taught that he came to bring to light life and immortality, and to prepare the mind for the enjoyment of the same, by its manumission from sin. Of this truth the world was ignorant; hence the necessity of its promulgation by the divinely appointed teachers. Peter said to the Jews, "Unto you first, God, having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from your iniquities,"—not from misery in a future world.

The Athenians accused Paul that "He was a setter forth of strange Gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection." By reference to Matt. i, 21, we learn, that the Redeemer was called Jesus, because he was to save his people from sin; therefore the inference is, that when Paul preached Jesus and the resurrection at Athens, he taught, that the blessings wrought by the Saviour's mediation was man's deliverance from sin, to be enjoyed chiefly beyond the valley of death.

The Jews, through fear that their traditions might prove false by his defence of man's redemption, endeavored to persuade the legal tribunal to convict Paul of heresy on this account, as we learn from his

declaration, "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question." And he resists the charge before Agrippa by the inquiry "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"

As the most eminent Jews professed a belief in a future existence, it may at first appear strange, that they should be so much opposed to the apostle's ministrations; but their enmity resulted from their bigoted attachment to their peculiar views. The Pharisees, one of the most influential classes, believed that the wicked Gentiles were to be the subjects of never ending misery in eternity, and consequently imagined themselves injured by the opposite doctrine of Christ's embassadors, that when the dead are raised, they are made alive in Christ,—in holiness and happiness.

It is not the intention of our present labor to exhibit arguments demonstrating man's immortality, for that was the work of the morning service; but to present the nature of the state into which we are to come by the resurrection—a subject of importance to the Christian, as by it we can determine the much controverted question—the final destiny of our race. In all inquiries of this nature, we should be directed by the information furnished us by the Scriptures. Notwithstanding such is our inclination, yet as a preparatory step, we are allowed to avail ourselves of the light reflected from the influence which the doctrine, as recognized by the apostles, had upon them. We have seen, that Dr. Clarke thought it excited in their hearts the emotions of cheerfulness. This sentiment is derived from Peter's language, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath

begotten us again into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." Paul invariably spoke of the resurrection and its consequences with expressions of gladness, as we shall show in the sequel. Now from this circumstance, it is evident, that man's condition in the future being is to equal in happiness his condition in this life. If this is not true, could those that have had a perfect vision of the resurrection have anticipated the event with pleasure?

We would not have the hearer infer from the fact, that we design explicitness and positiveness, that we are to attempt to evidence or disprove every idea which the imagination may bring forward for discussion. Since we have professed an acquaintance with the Scriptures, we have been solicited to give our views concerning the particular appearance of heaven. To such an invitation we have no definite answer to return; for the testimony instructs us no farther than that immortality is a state of happiness. All other endeavors at description are vain. It is true, the inspired writers employ descriptive phraseology, gathered from temporal things which are significant of peace, prosperity, and splendor, the design of which is only to express the glory and blessedness of the spiritual being.

Again, the inquiry, Shall we retain our identity and our memories to enable us to recognize our friends and recollect the past?—is one for which we have no clear scriptural answer. Revelation has not touched directly those points, for such particularity is superfluous, as it is a most natural conviction, that if we are to be immortalized, we shall

retain a consciousness of our personality and a knowledge of the fact, that we had been in existence prior to our entrance into the house which is from heaven; hence the Spirit of Truth did not consider it necessary to give, in relation to these points, a more definite revelation than is contained in the declaration, "It does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." But upon every essential point all requisite information is imparted, as it is implied in the text, "So is the resurrection of the dead."

We have already asserted, that the future is superior to the present. This declaration involves the idea that there is a change after death. We would have this fact distinctly marked, that the evidence may show the falsity of the contrary—that there is no change after death. Such an opinion evinces an entire ignorance of the following: "It"—the dead—"sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."—Vs. 42—44.

This quotation prepares us to particularize.

I. We learn from the evidence before us, that the resurrection world is one of spirituality; therefore the mortal natures in which the mind is now confined are not to receive the immortal dwelling. This truth is eloquently exemplified by an exhibition of the difference of the characters of Christ and Adam. "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth,

earthy; the second is the Lord from heaven. And as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now, this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—Vs. 44—50.

To those who are careful to discern the design of this illustration, it is replete with instruction. It teaches, that the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it, disencumbered of the imperfections peculiar to time and sense. By its transition from this dwelling it exchanges a garment of corruption, dishonor and weakness—the possessions of the natural Adam—for a mantle of incorruption, glory, and power—the characteristics of the Lord Jesus. And thus-freed of the earthly tabernacle, its temptation, sin and death, and attired with the likeness of the glorious body of the spiritual Saviour, it is capacitated and prepared to commune in spirit and in truth with God who is a spirit.

II. Another truth, which merits attention in this examination, is that all men are thus to be changed from the sinful-corruptible to the heavenly-spiritual.

We are aware, that the Christian sects that deny the restitution, were we allowed to converse with them, would contend that none but Christians in the apostle's age are embraced in his language. And the argument usually offered to support this supposition is, that his epistle was addressed to believers only, and therefore, the truths contained are applied to none other. We confess that the letter was written to the church at Corinth; but we do not concede that its doctrines have such a limited refer-

ence. And all thinking minds cannot but concur with us. Let us test the force of the statement, that none save believers addressed are intended in the apostle's application, by examining the text and context. "So is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption." Does not the raised dead include any except the members of the Corinthian church? Is this number all that is sown in corruption? These questions immediately convince the candid that all that die are included in the apostle's application, and hence, that all men are to receive the glorious and incorruptible natures of immortality, for all that are sown are raised.

Perhaps those whose errors we design to correct, as they will now see the want of strength in their supposed objection, may wish to extend the application to all the righteous in every age and country. But the same reasoning is opposed to this conclusion which was to the other. To evince it we will refer to the twenty-second verse, "As in Adam all die." Now if the apostle meant the righteous only, then none die in Adam save them. And is this true? Certainly not, for both good and bad, it is universally conceded, die in Adam-sinful as he died; and, therefore, it must be as generally acknowledged, that both righteous and unrighteous are to be made alive in Christ—not however then unrighteous; for if the word *all* means the *whole* in the first member of the verse, it evidently does in the second.

These premises and conclusions show us, that the objection, which we have examined, and which is most frequently employed against the universality of the application of the apostle's doctrine expressed in the text and context, is wanting in force.

III. We have now arrived at that place in the work before us in which we may understandingly present the truth, that the resurrection world is a state into which sin, death and misery will not come, and therefore, all in that home will be blessed with the holiness and happiness of spirituality. This fact is in opposition to as great an error as has ever been prevalent among the community of Christians. Many at the present time sincerely believe, that those who are not reconciled to God prior to their departure from this life are to be punished for ever in the future existence. And almost all the threatenings in the Bible are by them quoted in proof of their sentiments. Consequently, if those conscientious persons were present to hear, they would doubt much the following statement, viz.,—in all places in the Bible where there is any thing said about the resurrection of the literally dead, there is nothing written concerning punishment or judgment; and wherever we read relative to punishment or judgment, there is not a word pertaining to the literal resurrection. If the hearer understands this assertion, he perceives that we do not deny that there are judgments, for we believe in all that are recorded; but wherein we differ from others is, that none of these punishments are to transpire after the introduction of the soul into the immortal world.

And if he is in any degree interested to possess a correct knowledge of the Scriptures, he will forthwith inquire, How can it be determined, whether the speaker's declaration is or is not correct?

The method is not the one which is most commonly adopted, which is to repeat, without reference to their true connection, passages which contain threatenings; for it may be found by the principles

of correct interpretation, that none of them allude to a future being. In consequence of practising this superficial rehearsal, the Scriptures are misunderstood. But if due carefulness be exercised when we read to discover the times and seasons, knowledge will be possessed. To decide the correctness of our proposition we will now pursue the infallible rule.

1. The chapter from which the text is taken is wholly devoted to the discussion of the literal resurrection. The apostle here gives us a most minute explication of every point, but he does not pen a syllable concerning punishment. Now, in view of this circumstance, if it be true, that the world is to be judged subsequently to the resurrection, is it not unaccountable, that Paul did not mention it in this its most appropriate place? And this is evidently its suitable connection. Why then was he perfectly silent upon that matter? The reason to our mind is, he believed not the idea. This conclusion appears irresistible when we consider that this chapter is the only instance in which he presents a particular explanation of the resurrection. All other cases are only brief allusions.

2. Another examination of the resurrection, is the conversation which the Divine Teacher held with the Sadducees. They disbelieved that man is destined to immortality, and were among the most active enemies of Christ. They came to him, breathing the spirit of enmity, with a question which they thought would confound him, and expose him to the ridicule of the people. He answered their supposed objection, and then exhibited the condition of those that obtain the resurrection; and yet did not intimate that some are to be punished immortally;—and surely, if he had had such

a thought, he would not have withheld it from these violent opponents.

3. We have now noticed all the places in which the literal resurrection is discussed. Other instances are merely allusions to it. Perhaps the hearer may deem us mistaken, as it is written, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."—John v. 28, 29. Here is a resurrection mentioned in connection with punishment; but it does not militate against the ground we have assumed, for this resurrection to damnation, as it is proved by the context, is not literal, but moral, and one through which the people living in Christ's time were passing. To manifest this, we first inquire, what was its nature? The twenty-fourth verse replies, that it was to those who at that time had received Christianity;—a deliverance from unbelief—moral darkness—to eternal life, which is to know God and Christ. "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death into life." This is proof positive, that this resurrection to life is not an introduction into immortality; for those that believed possessed the everlasting life, and came not into condemnation, and were already passed from death into life; and were, notwithstanding, in this existence.

This view is, secondly, confirmed by the answer given in the twenty-fifth verse, to the question, To what time does this resurrection relate? "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those that hear shall

live; *i. e.*, had already come, and would continue, during which those that heard and believed the Redeemer's voice, would receive the spiritual life which the Son of God had power to impart to the believer. All this was being done while Christ was speaking. At this, *i. e.*, the fact that those who believed, rose from moral death, the Jews were told not to marvel, for greater wonders of the same nature were in their presence in this life to transpire; for both those that believed and those that did not were to rise—the former, those that had done good to the resurrection of life—and the latter, those that had done evil to the resurrection of damnation. Well authenticated facts demonstrate this part of the New Testament. During Christ's ministry, and to the time of his coming, those that believed passed from a state of spiritual condemnation to eternal life; and those who rejected him remain dead in trespasses and sins; but at his coming within that generation to reward every man according to his works;—all that were in the graves, *i. e.*, morally,—not only those who believed, but those that did not come forth;—the believers to enjoy the life as had others before them previous to his coming, but the unbelievers to condemnation—a recompense for their sins. No one, who is familiar with the events of the forty years which succeeded the crucifixion, can fail to discern the verification of this prophecy.

Again, we have, if possible, a more direct and conclusive process of demonstrating the truth of the view we have taken. It is admitted by all, both Universalists and their opposing brethren, that the Scripture, being examined, is parallel with Daniel, xii. 2, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and

some to shame and everlasting contempt." By consulting the preceding verse, in connection with the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, it will be perceived, that Christ applied the prophet's language to the events connected with the distruction of Jerusalem. Daniel says, that at that time when Michael (Christ), the great prince, shall stand up, "there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." Christ quotes this, and knowing more than Daniel, adds, "no, nor ever shall be." See Daniel xii. 1; Matt. xxiv. 15, 21.

We have, therefore, before us, a chain of evidence from John to Daniel, and from Daniel to Matthew, clearly proving, that the resurrection of damnation recorded by John, is of a moral nature, and transpired within the natural life-time of some of the disciples at the coming of Christ, to punish the enemies of truth. "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works;" (those that have done good—believed—shall come forth to the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil—rejected Christ—to the resurrection of damnation); "verily I say unto you, there be some standing here who shall not taste of death, till they shall see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Matt. xvi. 27, 28. See also Mark viii. 38, ix. 1; Luke ix. 26, 27.

The words "graves" and "dust of the earth" may at first appear objections, but a very little biblical knowledge will inform us that this phraseology is used in the Bibile in a figurative sense to represent a people in a low, degraded condition. This is brought to view in Ezekiel xxxvii. 12, "Then he

said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel, therefore, prophesy and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you unto the land of Israel." This transaction is the same in nature as that contained in the fifth chapter of John's history.

If our limits were not circumscribed, we might say more in substantiation of our views, but what we have presented is sufficient to show that there are not any real objections to the statement, that wherever the literal resurrection is recorded nothing is written concerning punishment, for when a resurrection is mentioned in connection with judgment it is seen to be moral instead of literal.

4. To notice all the instances of punishment, showing that they have no reference to the immortal world, would require more time than what is now under our command. From any of these passages we are willing to give sermons explaining them at length, demonstrating that Christ is the judge of the world, and that the punishments which he inflicts in that office are to be endured anterior to the resurrection. This is the Bible doctrine of punishment. "The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth much more the wicked and the sinner." Prob. xi. 31.

Notwithstanding our time is restricted, we can demonstrate this doctrine sufficiently for biblically studious minds, by the two following interesting Scripture facts. First, Christ says, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."—John v. 22. Second, the apostle says, that then, *i. e.*, at the resurrection of the litera'

dead, Christ "shall have delivered up the kingdom to God the father."—1 Cor. xv. 22—24. Now is it not discerned, that whatever punishment Christ, as judge of the world, inflicts, he must do it while he has the kingdom, and hence prior to the resurrection, for at that time he surrenders the dominion to God; and that God cannot judge afterwards, as he judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. Nothing can be more conclusive, that the punishments of the divine government are to affect their purpose, and close antecedently to the resurrection. On this point we need not say more, as the summary process which we have given will be satisfactory to the candid and investigating inquirer, as a careful reading of the judgments recorded will manifest, that they refer to the dealings of God toward man before the close of the Messiah's reign.

Having answered all objections, and proved negatively our assertion, that the resurrection state is one into which sin, death, and misery will not come, we pass to our positive assurances. We would observe, that the selections we shall make are but a small part of the proof we have, that the consummation of the mediation of the Prince of peace is universal salvation. For we shall only, at present, avail ourselves of the assistance which is given us in the accounts written of the resurrection. This will suffice for our present purpose.

I. The connection of the text is replete with the most explicit substantiations. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—v. 22. The point to be remembered is, that all are made alive *in Christ*. "He that is *in* Christ is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all

things are become new."—2 Cor. v. 17. That which is possessed while in the sinful Adam will be done away, and all is to be created anew in the sinless Christ. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall bear the image of the heavenly."

Again, verse 26, "The last enemy shall be destroyed, death." Such is the reading, omitting the words supplied by the translators Mark the language. The last enemy, death, is to be destroyed. As there can be no enemy after the last, and as this is to be destroyed, can there be what is popularly denominated, eternal death?

Again, verse 28. It is here said, that when Christ shall have given up the kingdom, and become subject, God will be all and in all. The dominion of God will be supreme and universal. Will a part be in endless misery blaspheming their Creator's name? No. For all are in God and He in all.

Again, verses 40—42. "There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." We quote this very appropriate illustration to evidence our views, and to correct an error which some gather from it. We not unfrequently hear it presented as proof of the idea, that there will be a diversity of situation and degrees of enjoyment in heaven. But such is a misapprehension of the point which the apostle designed to illustrate. His intention was not to manifest a difference between the conditions of some in a future world, but to exhibit the difference between the present and the future existence.

This will appear evident, as we particularly notice the illustration in connection with the truth intended to be illustrated. "One star differeth from another star in glory. So is the resurrection." How is it? Mark what follows. If the dead is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption, &c. *i. e.*, the dead when raised will be as superior in condition to what they were when sown, as the glory of the celestial is to the terrestrial bodies. Such is the fact illustrated, *i. e.*, that the corruption, dishonor, and weakness of this sinful state will not enter into this immortality, but not that some will there be in degree of happiness like stars of the first and some of the second magnitude.

Again, verses 54—56. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting, O grave,"—hades, hell—"where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin."

That we discern the full force of this part of the apostle's disquisition of the nature of the resurrection state, we must take into consideration the peculiarity of the place at which he had arrived in his subject. He, by the gift of inspiration, stood upon the shore of the immortal world with his vision increased to a degree that he was enabled to survey every appearance upon the whole surface of eternity. And what did he behold? Did he see hades, hell—translated here *grave*—a victor over a part of the human race? Did he witness sin perpetuated through eternity? No. These enemies were not there. They were subdued—destroyed by the victorious Redeemer. Such being the result of the

mediatorial service the apostle was prompted to add, "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." In our judgment, to assert that any of the human family are to be doomed to the misery of endless sin is a virtual declaration, that Paul's vision of the future deceived him.

II. More of positive evidence of our views is the Saviour's conversation with Sadducees. "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead cannot die any more, for they are equal unto the angels."—Luke xx. 35, 36. Nor if their natures are angelic, will they be sinful subjects of misery? No. For the legitimate conclusion is, that if all that are raised are equal to the angels, the state into which they come is one in which they will be holy and happy. Are angel's unhappy or unholy?

Perhaps the phraseology "accounted worthy," may appear to some an objection. But to what is it an objection? It is not more opposed to the doctrine of universal salvation than it is to that of endless misery, for if the expression "accounted worthy" implies that some are not to be raised from the dead then they cannot be possessed of consciousness, and hence will not be the subjects of happiness or misery.

It should, therefore, be remembered by our friends who believe in endless suffering, that when they quote this language as evidence against us, it is as much opposed to them. Hence both parties are equally interested to ascertain that it does not mean that some of man's kindred are not to be raised from the sleep of the grave. And that this was not the Saviour's intention, is evident from the fact that he

proceeded immediately to prove to the Sadducees, who thought that God would not deem any of the dead worthy to be, or worth being immortalized, that all would be raised. "Now that the DEAD"—(not a part of them)—"are raised up, even Moses showed at the burning bush when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For he is not God of the dead but of the living, for ALL"—(not a part only)—"live unto him." From this it is seen, that he designed to instruct the Sadducees (which truth they disbelieved, and maintain the contrary idea—endless unconsciousness), that all, as the children of an immortal God, in his estimation, would be considered sufficiently valuable to be associated with him in spiritual immortal being; and and that in that state they would be delivered from the peculiarities and imperfections of mortality.

III. Both of these conclusions are incontestably proved by the hope which Paul cherished. By reference to Acts xxiv. 15, it will be seen that he had both an expectation and desire, for hope is composed of both, that there was to be a resurrection both of the just and unjust.

Now if Christ designed to represent, that the unjust are not in the sight of God accounted worthy to obtain, by his assistance, immortality, how does it happen, that the apostle had faith in such an event? Was he mistaken? No Christian will pretend it. Hence it is perceived, that the above supposed objection is without foundation.

To return then, again, to the contested point, whether the unjust in this existence are to be unjust in the future, and therefore miserable, we will bring to our aid the hope of Paul. If the resurrection is to usher the unjust into an eternity of wicked-

ness and wo, would this servant of God have desired that they should rise from the dead? If we are to answer this question affirmatively, then he was not a benevolent ambassador of the compassionate Jesus, but a practical misanthropist. But as the apostle was celebrated for his love of humanity, we are confident, that his hope was derived from the thought, that both the just and unjust are to partake of the blessings of the mediation of the Saviour of the world. We have now adduced a sufficiency of evidence of the ground we have assumed. Other considerations now claim attention.

I. The audience may desire to know our views upon the question, What is the time, or order of the resurrection? This inquiry is a very proper one, but it is of secondary importance; for if we have a well-grounded expectation, that we are to be clothed with an house from heaven, we are satisfied, though we may not be as decided, with regard to the precise hour when God will exercise his gracious power. Hence we are half inclined to reply, as did the apostle in relation to another subject, "Of the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write." But if we are permitted to express an opinion, we will say, without any desire to excite controversy among the brotherhood, that there are two principal systems prevailing in our denomination. One is that the dead enter immortality in the order in which they die, and that the event immediately succeeds the dissolution of the body. The other is that it does not instantaneonsly follow the death of the body. Our convictions, thus far, from Scripture, persuade us to the adoption of the latter. We are thus taught by the following facts:

1. The apostle asserts that Christ rose from the

dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept. As the selecting of the grain first ripe preceded the gathering of the general harvest, so Christ's resurrection as a pledge of that of others was prior to those that were to rise. And that they did not immediately rise is certain from the circumstance that they slept. 2. The apostle speaks of the order not as though it followed the order of the departure from mortality. "But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." 3. He invariably spoke of it as though it was future. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump (for the trumpet shall sound), and the dead shall be raised." 4. He in his second epistle to Timothy denominated those errorists who said, "the resurrection is past already."

II. Such being our sentiments on this point, it may be reasonably demanded of us to as openly present our convictions concerning the condition of the soul during the intermediate time from the death of the body to the immortalization of the spirit that returns to God. Our research only instructs us that the dead are in the preserving care of Him in whom we live, move, and have our being. We are told that the dust returns to the earth as it was and the Spirit to the God who gave it; but of its rest we have no certain information save what is implied by the apostle's idea, "If Christ be not raised then they also which are not fallen *asleep* in Christ are perished." Hence a very natural inference is, that it is in unconsciousness to be quickened into life when it shall please Him to whom is known the greatest good of his creatures. Whether our conclusion is or is not correct, one thing is certain, which is, that

whatever be the state of man during this period, it is such, that the divine goodness and mercy are over him. Notwithstanding we are not authorized to explore the valley of death, as revelation has not dissipated the cloud which overshadows it, yet, beyond it, we can clearly descry Mount Zion, where the living God, in whom alone is immortality, commands the blessing, even life for ever more; and to it we can, in full faith, nothing doubting, direct the hope of the mortal pilgrim, as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast.

III. For the instruction of those who are not wholly acquainted with the means by which we contend the spirit of man is prepared for the communion of saints in immortal holiness and happiness, we would remark, that it has been asserted of Universalists, that they contend, that the salvation of the soul is wrought by the resurrection, *i. e.*, that this operation is to fit the spirit for the purity of heaven. To those who thus judge us, we would say, we are misunderstood. For to the resurrection we ascribe no efficacy except what necessarily results from a deliverance from the earthy nature to spirituality; but by this we do not mean the redemption which Christ came to effect, *i. e.*, the freedom of the soul from the bondage of sin, and its consequent reconciliation to God —its baptism into the waters of divine love. This is effected in part upon some in this present life by a manifestation of the divine goodness through the medium of Jesus; and by the same spirit of grace it will be bestowed upon all when every tongue confesses that Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. The hearer will not fail to get our idea, if we say, that universal salvation, the consummation of the Saviour's mission, will be accomplished

by the same influences which love and obedience are produced in the hearts of all believers.

In conclusion, suffer us to entreat, that the subject now discussed may have its perfect work. We have cited good authority, that the tendency of the resurrection was most beneficial upon the primitive Christians. They were excited to obedience, diligence and cheerfulness through it. Let this mantle fall on us. We should be diligent in our endeavors to improve our minds by the possession of the evidences of our holy religion, and our feelings by a discernment of the inducements we have to venerate our God and love our fellows; and obedient to the precepts of the perfect exemplar, making his holiness our goodness, his love our philanthrophy, his meekness our humbleness. And these mental and moral possessions will yield us the cheerfulness, the joy and peace, which are the gifts of the Comforter—the Spirit of Truth.

NOTE.—The Sermons, which we have inserted in this book, were preached by Mr. Pierce in the early part of his ministry. And they were selected by individuals who heard them preached; and we did not understand that any of them were delivered on any particular occasion, until No. 2 was in the hands of the printer, and partly in type; when we found, by examining Mr. P.'s journal, that *this sermon* was a funeral discourse, preached Oct. 24th, 1837, in Dana, Mass., on the death of a young lady.

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

A LETTER WRITTEN BY MR. PEIRCE, WHILE AN APPRENTICE, AT LANCASTER, TO HIS SISTER.

Dear Sister,—It is somewhat uncommon for friends to address letters to each other immediately after seeing and conversing together; but if it is, I will write forthwith, because I delight in doing it, and because I wish to impress upon your mind the pre-eminence of our doctrine over all others, and its goodness, with other things relating to it; and because I wish to imbue into your mind the joys and pleasures of a virtuous life and the awful consequences of a vicious one. My first reason for writing is, that it is one of my greatest enjoyments to communicate to my friends what seemeth to me to be good. And this enjoyment soars to its acme when I address one so strongly connected to me by the ties of relationship as you are; one whose prosperity I look upon with a watchful eye and anxious expectation; one whom I would rejoice to see esteemed, regarded and loved by all good, virtuous and intelligent persons; one whose mind I should be glad to hear received the doctrine of Universalism to be the revealed truth from God; one whose happiness and fortune depends upon her good works and virtues; one who is yet young;—therefore these lines are not written without encouragement, as they would be if addressed to one who is in the last stages of life;—one who has the same regard for me that I have for her; yes, one

who loves me as I love her. An undoubted evidence of your love for me, I saw at our last separation. Then did I see your eyes full of tears of love; then your power of utterance did falter; then your breast did heave with emotions of affection, because you were suspicious that you should not see me again very soon, if ever. Then did I see the verification of this maxim, that actions speak louder than words, or are more apt to speak the truth. And here is a proper place to introduce another of my reasons for writing this epistle, which is, that I wish to have you see the pre-eminence of Universalism over limitarianism in rendering consolation to friends on such occasions. Let us suppose that we know that this was our last parting in this world;—and in fact, it may be; for we know not when the destroyer, death, will come; he may come as a thief in the night; many young persons he has cut down in a moment, when they were blooming in a state of apparent health;—and that we believed in a limited salvation, that a part of God's created intelligent beings will be doomed to a state of indescribable and unutterable torment. Under these circumstances, what would have been our feelings; they must have been almost insufferable, because, if a part are to be eternally damned, your or my lot may be among that part; so that our hopes would be founded upon uncertainty. Therefore we should have had no consolation, for we had no assurance of ever seeing each other, or enjoying each other's company again. But this was not the state of my feelings, when we parted; though I loved you and could not refrain from offering up to the fountain of love a fervent prayer for your prosperity and happiness, yet when I thought it was uncertain

whether I should ever see you again in this world, as I left you and rode along, I thanked God that he had given me a belief, which causes me to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; because it gives to me the assurance of the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began. "In a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed."—1 Cor. xv. 52. "For as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—1 Cor. xv. 22. O glorious and most consoling truth!—because, if all are raised and made alive in Christ, of course we shall also be raised to dwell together and be employed in praising God through the interminable ages of eternity.

Never before that afternoon of our parting had I so abundantly enjoyed the consolation of our doctrine. And I cannot refrain from acquainting you with my wanderings among the monuments erected in memory of the dead, and reading, as I passed, the epitaphs there inscribed, thereby learning the worth, meekness and beliefs, of the once living; until I came to the graves of our mother and our other relations. Then I could not forbear exclaiming aloud, where am I? I am alive though among the dead, and at the grave of a mother. Here lay the mortal remains of that being, who loved and cared for me, and whose love and care I do not know, for she died when I was young and did not know that such affection existed. O, by all that is good, am I never to enjoy the love and presence of a mother. No, answers infidelity; for annihilation awaits all that die. Horrible thought! Never, never, to enjoy a mother in immortality. O that I

never had been born to participate in such a moment as this, of indescribable, unhappy, feelings. Again, I asked, am I never to see my mother? No, not certain, answers Limitarianism. For a part are to be doomed to endless suffering, and the other part are to be received into the happy regions of heaven; there to dwell for ever in a perfect state of happiness. Here, again, my hopes are founded on uncertainty, and a gloom is cast over my prayers, hopes, and wishes, because I have no certain assurance of ever enjoying a happy immortality with my mother and friends. O can it be possible that my mother and friends, who are now and will be deposited here, are to be for ever separated from me and from each other, by a part being raised to endless damnation, and the other part to never-ending salvation? Yes, it is verily so, if Limitarianism is true. O what will be my feelings, even if I am the favored one, who is admitted into heaven. Then I shall look around for my friends, and if I do not see them, I shall be, of all beings, the most unhappy, because horrible thoughts will rush into my mind that they are weeping and weltering in torment. Yes, I know that I shall be unhappy, although in heaven; for I nor any other person, who possesses natural affection, can be happy, while seeing or knowing that our friends are suffering almost unlimited pain. No, I cannot be happy, even when the pain is for their benefit, like that caused by the amputation of a limb; much less can I be happy if I know that their pain is never to end. And endless pain cannot be for their benefit, because no period exists subsequent, in which they could receive any benefit from it. And what will be the feelings of my mother and friends if they are among

the part, who are received into heaven. They will also be unhappy. For there they will look around and know that I am not there; and therefore will be unhappy, because if they found me not, they would know that my lot was with the miserable, and they will pray and sorrow for my deliverance without hope.

But, alas, here I am yet at my mother's grave, a poor, unhappy being, if Limitarianism is true. O thou, holy God, who holdeth truth in thy hands, I pray thee that it is not true; for, if it is, an awful doom awaits all thy erring and fallible children. In this state of unhappy meditation, I asked again, am I never to know a mother's love and affection? Yes, certainly, answers that precious truth, Universalism. For all are to be made holy and happy at the resurrection by the free and unbought grace of God. For "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."—Ephs. ii. 8, 9. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—1 Cor. xv. 23. O, precious truth, in thee and in thee alone, do I find consolation; now I have the cheering thought that God's tender mercies are over all his works, in life and in death, and at the resurrection. And, sister, I will inform you that when this glorious thought rushed into my mind, I was happy, and my former unhappy moments of meditation disappeared as the morning dew before a resplendent sun. Then I was happy; for I thought that I should, at the resurrection of the dead, form the heavenly choir, with my mother and other friends, to be employed in praising God, and living with each other through eternity. Then I looked around upon the

monuments of the dead and contemplated upon the glory of God's government in suffering us to pass through life, death, and the resurrection, into the bliss of heaven. And I thanked him that he had suffered me, for my edification, to visit that place, which to me is sacred; and I acknowledged his goodness by saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. Thus did I visit the grave of my mother; and thus did I meditate; and there did I seek for consolation, and found it in no doctrine save Universalism; and, therefore, did receive an undeniable evidence that Universalism has the pre-eminence over all other doctrines in rendering consolation to those who need it. Therefore, dear sister, let us gratefully thank God that he has so highly favored us by giving us this good doctrine and its consolation. Let us praise him, by constantly endeavoring to walk according to his will and pleasure; and he taketh pleasure in seeing his children practice that which is good.

Here we have an uncontrovertible proof, that Universalism is a good doctrine, though there may be thousands of opinions to the contrary notwithstanding. Because this consolation, which its believers receive, is the fruit of Universalism; and if the fruit is good, the fountain from which it comes must be good. For our Saviour says, "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth corrupt fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."—Matt. vii. 16—18. Universalism is the tree of this consolation, and this

consolation is good, therefore, Universalism is good, because a corrupt, or not good, tree cannot bring forth good fruit. "For if the first fruit be holy the lump is also holy, and if the roots be holy so are the branches."—Rom. xi. 16. Now we do perceive that Universalism is good; therefore, let each of us ask, do we, or do we not, feel interested in its prosperity? Is it, or is it not, a real enjoyment to live and converse with those of a like precious faith? Have we, or have we not, a desire to see its name honored by a goodly number of virtuous followers? To each of these questions we must answer, yes. And we must know that its prosperity depends upon its believers. You and I can do something for its propagation, and can be advocates of it by walking agreeable to its precepts and the virtues of this life. If we are deemed virtuous by exemplary persons, they will be led to inquire, what is the cause of our virtues? and if they find that we are Universalists, they will say that it must be a good doctrine, for it makes its believers virtuous; and, therefore, will come and join us in our cause. But on the other hand, if we are not virtuous, they will say that our doctrine cannot be good because it does not make its believers good; and they will, therefore, shun us and our doctrine with disdain. There are some young persons in the world, and I am sorry to say it, who wrongfully suppose that if they merely nominally profess Universalism and pay no regard to its precepts, that this is all which is required of them, and all which is necessary for its advancement. But to those who are under this egregious error, I must say that they injure it more than they benefit it, because, if they did not nominally profess it, their vices would not be laid to its charge.

Sister, ponder upon this, and consider yourself to be an advocate of the truth;—one who can do something for the advancement of that which is good, by always doing virtuously and justly. Good, did I say; yes, if there is any system of religion in the world that is good, it is certainly that of Universalism; because it gives to God all the praise and glory, and to Christ a name above all other names—the name of being the Saviour of the world. It is good for us, because it causes us to look upon all as members of the same great family,—though many may be in the bonds of iniquity; but the reward will soon be upon them. Yet we live in hope that the time will come when they will turn from their iniquities unto God. It is good, because it creates in those, who believe it with a heartfelt belief, a spirit to do good. And it is a good doctrine because all good men pray that it may be true; therefore, it is not possible for it to be a bad doctrine, because it is not possible for all good men to pray for the truth of a bad doctrine. And it would be derogatory to the goodness with which man is endowed, if it was received as truth, that all good men can pray for the truth of a bad doctrine.

And, sister, there is among us a part of the Christian community, who foolishly suppose that they are the only part who are worthy of the Christian name; who claim the exclusive privilege of giving instruction to the young upon religious points; who vainly suppose that they are the only part who will be admitted into heaven, and who, without hesitation, condemn all others to the kingdom of an ever-living, omnipresent and omnipotent devil. These persons will tell you that Universalism is a bad doctrine, and that if you believe it you will be eternally

damned. But before we receive their words as truth, we will candidly ask, for what are we to be damned? And that we may receive a correct answer, what Universalism is, we will endeavor to learn. Universalism acknowledges that there is one God, and that his nature is love. "For God is love."—1 John iv. 8. That he is infinite in the attributes of love, justice, mercy, knowledge, wisdom and power, and is self-existent. That he is the creator, supporter, guardian and moral governor of all mankind. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being."—Acts xvii. 28. That "the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."—Ps. cxlv. 9. That "the Lord is good, for his mercy endureth for ever."—Ps. cvii. 1. And that God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked; that he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he doeth; and that there is no respect of persons. That "the way of the transgressor is hard;"—that "God will by no means clear the guilty;"—that "the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him;"—and that "the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner." And that he inflicts all his punishment for the benefit of the sufferer, as a good parent punishes a child for doing wrong, that the child may do wrong no more. For God never chastens us but "for our profit," causing all chastisement "afterwards to yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." That God "will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth; for there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be tes-

tified in due time."—1 Tim. ii. 4—6. And Universalism also acknowledges the mission of Jesus Christ, and that he is the Son of God. "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."—1 John iv. 14. That "he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world."—1 John ii. 2. That "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life; for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."—John iii. 16, 17. "The Father loveth the Son and hast given all things into his hands."—John iii. 35. That thou, O Lord, "hast given him power over all flesh that he shall give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—John xvii. 2. And Christ saith, "All things are delivered unto me of my father."—Matt. xi. 27. And that he also saith, "All that the father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."—John xii. 32. And that "Christ shall see of the travial of his soul and shall be satisfied."—Isa. liii. 11.

Thus have we learnt what Universalism is. Therefore, you cannot avoid seeing that it bestows upon God and Christ the best character that human goodness can imagine. Consequently you have an incontestable argument for those who say that you will be damned for believing it; because it is out of the nature and order of God's immutable laws for him to damn you for sincerely believing what is good of him and Christ, and what the Bible contains. If we are to be damned for belief, it cer-

tainly will be for believing bad things of God and Christ, and what is not contained in the Bible. But this is not the case with us, because we do believe as good things of them as any other class of beings. For proof of this, call to mind all the systems of religion now extant, and compare them with Universalism, and then you will certainly perceive that it has the superiority in bestowing upon God the character of goodness in all his works. It appears to me to be the most inconsistent of all inconsistencies, that we should be damned for believing good things of God. But, O God, if I am in error, I pray thee to enlighten my soul by thy free grace, that I may be able to know what is truth. You, like all other young persons, who openly and invariably acknowledge that they believe in the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," will have to encounter severe obstacles when attacked by those who would fain have you believe otherwise. I mean ministers of the various sects, who believe in endless misery, and whom I call Limitarians, because they believe in a limited salvation. They will come to you in the holy garb of religion, shrouded with the outward appearance of perfect holiness, and as messengers of peace should come, with a sedate countenance, saying, that if you will believe in endless misery and an everlasting devil, and reject Universalism, you can be saved; but if you do not you will be irretrievably lost—for ever to bask in the wrath of God. But before you believe their words, please to hearken unto the voice of the Bible, and then you will see the inconsistency and fallacy of their words and conduct; because you will behold the vast contrast between

the necessary belief required of Christ and his primitive followers, and what is required by the minister of the Limitarian faith. Let us hearken unto the Scriptures, and sincerely inquire what is requisite to be believed in order to have eternal life, *i. e.*, to be saved or delivered from the bonds of iniquity into the glorious liberty of the virtuous children of God. The answer is from the Saviour. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life."—John vi. 47. "And this is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. "And we believe, and are sure that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."—John vi. 69. This is what our Saviour required those to believe whom he taught; and it was all that was necessary, because it always was acceptable. Therefore, are not ministers of the present age very inconsistent, if they say that it is necessary for us to believe something, that we may be saved, besides what our Saviour requires.

And we have more proof of what is necessary to be believed in the eighth chapter of Acts, where Philip reasoned so powerfully with the eunuch that he persuaded him to be a believer in Christ, as we can see by reading the 35th, 36th and 37th verses: "Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believeth with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Here we perceive that Philip thought it only necessary that he should be-

lieve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God for him to be baptized and received as a Christian. Now Universalists do believe in Christ, and that he is the Son of God, "the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." And this is all that is requisite to be believed that we may be saved, as I have plainly shown you from the Scriptures. But read and understand for yourself. O, I hope that you will always believe in Christ and him crucified, and in him only.

Many young persons like you have been driven to desperation, by ministers who threaten and drive into religion. They will portray to you endless misery in the most glaring manner imaginable. I hope that you will have no confidence in them, and will call to mind that Christ and his apostles used no such means. Yet there are ministers with whose company I hope you will be favored, who use right means, and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, and whom I respect. It is written, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things;"—who bring consolation to those who mourn, by expatiating upon the gospel of Jesus Christ and the glory of God's government;—who persuade and beseech men to come to Christ, and to practice good things, as St. Paul did, when he said, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service;"—who preach a doctrine like the preaching of the angel unto the shepherds abiding on the fields of Bethlehem: "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." Now, what is this good tiding? Is it endless

misery? No. Because if it is, it is to be unto all people; and it cannot be "good tidings of great joy" to hear that endless misery is to be the portion of all. What, then, is this good tiding? It is that there "is born in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord;" and it is universal salvation, because he is to be good tidings of great joy, *i. e.*, a Saviour unto all people. Therefore, I repeat, "Beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things." These feet cannot be the feet of those who preach endless misery, because it is not glad tidings of good things to any one, neither to those who suffer it or to those who know that others are suffering it.

I would have you constantly attend the meetings of those who preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things. Constantly, did I say. Yes. Constantly on the Sabbath. But I would not have you go to the four and forty days' meetings, to the inconvenience of your employer, as many do. These days, which four-days' meetings occupy, I believe are set apart by the cunning devices of men and not by God; because he has set apart one-seventh part of the days for public religious worship, and it is all that is necessary, because if it was not he would have set apart more. For my own part, I enjoy myself more on the Sabbath than on any other day in the week, though I labor under a disadvantage which you do not. It is this. I have to attend meeting where the preaching to me is bread which satisfieth not. Yet I live in hope, and am determined, when I go from this place, to take my abode where I can hear the gospel preached in its purity. I would have you go to meeting and there endeavor to become acquainted with virtuous

believers in God's universal and impartial grace. For it is pleasant to commune with those who do not, as some do, shut up the kingdom of heaven against all, excepting their own sect, but are willing and believe that all will be saved. It is pleasant to hear a minister preach and pray for that which he believes will be accomplished in due time;—to hear and learn a doctrine which harmonizes with the attributes of God;—which we cannot only hear, but feel;—which bestows upon God and Christ a character that causes tears of thanks and love to flow from the eyes of the believing hearer, and to hear a minister adduce all the arguments which can be imagined against a vicious and in favor of a virtuous life.

I would have you at all times, when occasion requires, openly profess what you believe;—though you may be sometimes environed by those who would have you believe in various human creeds;—though they may vainly dispise you for professing what you deem honestly to be the truth;—though you may suffer reproach as St. Paul did, for he says, "For, therefore, we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." Some do not profess their belief, because it is not popular in the company with whom they associate. This you must not do, because the only way to make it popular, or in other words, that it may be more generally received in all places is, we must openly profess it and virtuously defend it by a well-ordered life. And it cannot be expected that our doctrine, at so early a period as this from its origin, in this country, can be popular in all places. Enough for us to know is, that it is good, that it is the truth,

and that it has a good number of virtuous followers. Though we may not enjoy their company at all times, yet we must give them the cheering intelligence that we are not ashamed of its name. And if we believe one thing and profess another, we are of the eleven of the Pharisees. That is hypocrisy. And when it is known that a person is a dissembler, he is ever shunned as a person unworthy of confidence; because if he has been a hypocrite once, he will be again. And not only this, there is more enjoyment in professing our belief than there is in consenting to, or being obliged to hear, what we deem to be untruth.

I would have you occupy your leisure hours, and Sunday evenings, in some useful study. Scientific books I would recommend in preference to novels. Read and study that which will be for your future benefit. But above all, let your paramount study be the Bible; for in it is found all the instruction which is needful; in it is revealed life and immortality for all, and thereby a pleasure is cast over all the scenes of life. Learn its precepts and follow them, and then you will be virtuous; then you will be a competent judge of its doctrine, and thereby can avoid imposition from those who deceive the unwary. A true knowledge of the Bible is indispensable to those who are determined to be defenders of its truth. Those who study it are fully compensated, because its truths are interesting and instructive, and above all other things, cheering to the soul.

I must now come to my last reason for writing, and it is this. I wish to have you know the joys and pleasures of a virtuous life, and the awful consequences of a vicious one. The word *virtuous* is

the only one which is necessary for me to use, because a person who is in a degree holy, chaste, honest, righteous, or good, is in the same degree virtuous. Do not understand me to mean, that you can be perfectly virtuous, and thereby cause you to cease from exertion. No, far from this. For we are all frail, fallible creatures; there are none of us perfect, no, not one. I mean, that we can approximate to perfection in virtue, and that we are free agents. And by the way, though it is wandering from my subject, yet I cannot forbear informing you of what I mean by free agent, because I wish to have you believe in free agency, though not as many do. My belief of free agency is this, namely, that we have power to do well or not, just as we please. There are two courses in life which can be pursued, one is virtuous and the other is vicious; and that the reward of the former is happiness, and that of the other is unhappiness; and that these rewards are with us and upon us, and are finished prior to the resurrection. Now this free agency and these two courses are for our benefit, and are necessary, because if we were not free agents, *i. e.*, were forced to do what we would not do, we should be exceedingly unhappy, our feelings would be like those which we experience when dreaming of being forced to commit some awful crime against our will. And these two courses are necessary, because there would be no enjoyment without them. What causes us to be happy, when we have done virtuously, is the thought that there is a vicious course, and that we have shunned it. And they are necessary, because God, through his divine pleasure, wished to have us know this imperfect state, and thereby fit us more abundantly to enjoy a perfect state of immortal bliss.

But to return to my subject. We cannot be happy without virtue; therefore, dear sister, refrain from vice as you would from the poisonous fangs of an asp—from poison which would end your mortal existence. Though vice may appear to savor of pleasure and happiness, yet whoever partakes of it is always mistaken; for it is written, "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil."—Rom. ii. 9. A person may be dressed in all the costly apparel which the world affords, possessing coffers of gold and the riches of the Indias, yet, if he gained it by vicious means, his possession is a curse and not a blessing to him. He, a thousand times, says, O that it was equally distributed among those from whom I have viciously taken it, whose children are now suffering for the want of it. When this person retires to rest, his pillow is not a pillow of peace and sleep, but of wearisome and unhappy thoughts. He seeks for peace, and behold, there is no peace. He imagines that he hears the cries of those whose extortioner he has been. He goes out into the world among his fellow-beings, and he is looked upon as one who stands eager to devour the innocent. He walks alone, and views the fields dressed in beautiful verdure, and rivers meandering along, emblematical of power, and exclaims, Behold all nature performing the part for which it was designed by its creator! But, alas! I have not! Here I am, a miserable and dispised being. O, now do I know that vice and unhappiness are inseparably united!—the latter certainly follows the former.

But, on the other hand, virtue is always rewarded; for it is written, "But honor, glory and peace to every man that worketh good."—Rom. ii. 10. Yes, sister, you may rely upon it, that virtuous actions

are abundantly rewarded. Virtue is all that is necessary that a person may have peace. It is the fountain from which all derive their peace.

A virtuous person acts virtuously for virtue's sake, simply because it is virtue. He may be in indigent circumstances, yet he is happy—his coarse morsels are sweeter to him than dainties are to the vicious. Let him be indigent or opulent, he is esteemed by his associates. He judges others by himself, and hence thinks them to be virtuous, unless he knows to the contrary. He takes others by the hand, rejoicing because he knows that they have not aught against him, and because he can look upon them with a clear conscience and a guiltless eye. He can go forth unto the mountain and solitary places of the earth, enjoying the cooling zephyrs and meditating upon the unlimited expanse of creation and the mistery of his existence, with perfect happiness, and here he beholds beauty in all things; and when he returns to the busy world, he is greeted and received as a friend of philanthropy. His children call him blessed and obey him, because he is virtuous, and this causes him to rejoice as he passes along through this transitory state till he arrives at its end; then he meets the king of terrors with resignation knowing that he has acted well his part.

Thus I have penned for you the rewards of the two courses in life, which are within our grasp; and I think that you will coalesce with me in it, for it is apparent to every observing mind that it is verily so. And to maintain to the contrary, *i. e.*, that the rewards of virtue and vice are one and the same, the foundation of God's retributive justice is destroyed. But I must cease from this subject, for it is a momentous one, and I acknowledge my impo-

tence to do it justice; it merits the attention of one who has that very essential quality of mind called talent.

Some young persons have erroneously imagined, that they were unfortunate. They have gathered into their minds all the events which appeared to be against them—not even thinking of the privileges, blessings and enjoyments, which are open before them—consequently they have sunk into a state of melancholy. But let it not get fast hold of you, for it cannot be expected that all things will at first appear favorable to us. Neither is it for the best that we should be prosperous in all things. This I know from experience: for at the expiration of the three months which I spent in Boston, I exclaimed that all things are against me; for I thought that I had been unfortunate in all my undertakings. But I have since learnt that these troubles were for my profit. They rendered me more good than money possibly could.

If you are ever unfortunate do not dwell melancholy upon it. But arise and look abroad into the world and behold the numbers of beings who are deprived of reason and have not power to act for themselves—who are deprived of their limbs or some of the organs of sense; consequently can do nothing for the promotion of virtue and the annihilation of vice. You will then say, O I am thankful that I am not one of this number—that I have health—that the power is with me and on my part. Therefore, I would have you cheerfully put on the breastplate of virtue, and for a motto, improvement and well-doing; and firmly press forward for that glorious prize, which is happiness. Let us look back upon our former foolish and wrong actions,

and from them take warning; for we must know that we have done many foolish things. Let us honor our doctrine and it will honor us. If we are believers in God's universal and impartial grace, let our lives be agreeable to it. If we dispise and shun others, because they do not believe as we do—if we limit our acts of kindness to those of our own sect—if we let a spirit of revenge wrangle in our breasts—if we do not do what lieth in our power for the happiness of all universally alike, by persuading them to turn from vice unto virtue, we are very inconsistent, because we act wholly at variance with our doctrine. Think of this, and do what your conscience tells you, if you do not your conscience will condemn you. Let us live as we would if we were to be removed from this transitory state very soon, and as we would if we were to live three score years and ten—let it be either time, the same ponderous and persuasive arguments, in favor of well-doing, are applicable. For if we live until we are old, and we then, with a retrospective view of our lives, perceive that we have been honest, chaste, and have done the things which were good, and left undone the things which were bad, or in other words, that we have been virtuous—these thoughts will be the greatest boon which heaven can give. It will be a consolation which no one can take from us—which gold, and silver, and much possessions, without virtue, cannot give us at that time; and not only this, we shall have a good name, which is the greatest and best of all possessions. A good name is the most valuable legacy that we can bequeath to our friends.

You are undoubtedly aware that your present age is the most important of your life. Your most sin-

cere judgment is now required, for you have only one life to live, and the foundation of it is now to be laid; and if a good foundation is laid, the most essential part of the work is accomplished. If you now indulge in any species of vice it will be a hard task to turn from it at any future time. If you now suffer any evil passions to dwell in your mind, it will be a work of no small magnitude to eradicate them at any subsequent period. Therefore, your future destiny greatly depends upon the virtues which you now embrace and the vices which you now shun, because the things which you now do are your education, and it is an admitted truth that the future actions, passions, and habits of a person, depend upon his juvenile education.

But perhaps you will believe that I am not sincere in what I have written, because you have seen and known me to do things which do not harmonize with it. Yes, I acknowledge that I have done many wrong and foolish things, and the consequences are now upon me. But I hope that my present actions are agreeable to my precepts.

And all I need farther say is, that I hope you will believe me sincere. And my heart's prayer to God is, that you will be virtuous. And if you wish to make your brother happy, you must let him hear the cheering intelligence from you that the foundation of all your actions is virtue.

Sincerely yours, with the hope that you will preserve and often read this epistle, and it will serve as a memento from your brother,

JOHN PIERCE.

SPRING.

Spring is truly a cheering and resuscitating season. All nature appears to break from winter's icy chains, and to assume the garb of life and beauty. What seemed to be shrouded a few months ago in death, now exhibits a state of life. The king of day, who appeared to recede to the south, as though he was about to bid us an everlasting adieu, has returned, and emits his rays universally upon all things, animate and inanimate. The various feathered tribes again greet us with their melodious songs, and sing the praises of their Creator, being understood by him and by each other. The fields are covered with verdure, and give the industrious agriculturalist an indubitable assurance of another harvest time. The trees are dressed in the most perfect beauty, clearly showing forth the most perfect skill of that Almighty artist, who delineates his handiworks throughout unbounded space. Hence it is impossible for us to turn our eyes towards any part of creation, where is not seen exquisite beauty and usefulness, and incontrovertible evidence of the existence, goodness, and impartiality of an intelligent and omnipotent Creator and preserver of all things. Every season of the year is possessed of a sufficient number of pleasant scenes and enjoyments. Each season is absolutely necessary for the happiness of man, and of his subjects—the beasts of the field. New views and scenes are constantly presented to our sight, and if we endeavor to participate in them, happy will be our lot. But why is it that spring has the superiority over the other seasons, in giving em-

ployment to the creatures of the earth. It is the attendant circumstances of the season. The invigorating warmth of the sun, the salubrious influences of the zephyrs, are peculiarly suited to the nature of living creatures. The expected continuance of a long and delightful season of labor and employment and the final ingathering of the produce of the earth into the garners of industry, cause the mind to exult in the things around us, and to feel grateful for an existence.

Let us walk forth into the fields and contemplate the inexpressible grandeur of the landscape presented to our view. Here is a lesson for us; for we see the various parts of this view, all of which accomplish and are subservient to the end for which they were designed, by the beneficent Author of all good. And now is it possible for us to abuse these blessings, to abuse our existence, and the power delegated in us, by an indulgence in things which will tend to poison the young mind?—that native, innocent, and beautiful plant, which if judiciously cultivated and protected against the bloating effects of sin, will shoot forth its branches, and in due season will become a large, flourishing tree, exhibiting a venerable appearance. We must not, we cannot; for if we do, we are the most inconsistent of all creatures. Let us again cast our eyes around upon the hills, plains, and valleys, and see the many beauties of this view, and the many incentives for perseverance and industry. With these numerous blessings, can we for a moment repine in the thought that we are not blessed with every thing for which we could ask, or for which we could consistently wish. Finally, he who does not receive complete enjoyment from the circumstances attending this cheer-

ing season, must be possessed of insensibility, or is certainly laboring under the dark forebodings of infidelity, or the consequent effects of wickedness.

BEAUTY IN ALL THINGS.

Every thing is beautiful in its time. This assertion may appear fallacious, at its first reception into the mind, but a moment's reflection will satisfy us that it is verily true. It is true that things, which men make and do, are not beautiful. But when I say all things, I mean all which are made and caused by a power independent of man and of creation. All things are beautiful in their time. For proof of this, let us examine the visible things around us, as they are arranged in their places. The king of day appears to rise in the east, and to move in his curved path to the zenith, sending forth his vivifying influence upon the earth, causing the cattle of the pastures to retire into the shade, while all nature flourishes, as though life would always continue. Is not this a beautiful scene? Most assuredly. But it is so only in its time. For it would be robbed of all its beauty, if the king of day should be held, by an unknown power, in this high situation, henceforth to emanate his parching rays upon our heads. The lively green would soon be changed into an alarming state of aridity. Now no one will say, that things in this state would be beautiful. We will now view him as he passes towards the western horizon; there to make his exit from our sight. All this is attended with indescribable beauty and grandeur. We look to see the last glimmering of the source of light; we turn around, and myriads of twinkling stars and smooth

burning planets spring, as it were, into being, forming an incomprehensible field for contemplation. The queen of night comes in her oriental course, dressed in simplicity and majesty, with a countenance of love and meekness, smoothly gliding along in her wonted way, as a harbinger of peace. All these combined, allure the mind from terrestrial things, to regions unknown, and cause it to be lost in revery. But we must remember that all these objects of beauty, are beautiful only in their time. For if we had proof that we should never again see the rising sun of another day, a different train of thought would fill our minds in our night musings. But we have barely dismissed the beauties of the night time from our minds, when, behold, the canopy of heaven is opened! Light rushes in and all nature arises from its slumbers and puts on the garb of life, and the king of day resumes his wonted course. Thus we have seen beauty in some of the scenes of creation exhibited to our vision, by one revolution of the earth on its axis. And now let us dwell for a moment upon a shower of rain in the summer time. The clouds gather in heavy bodies in the blackness of darkness, appearing as though they would crush us beneath their weight; the wind rushes, as if driven by an irresistible force; the rain descends in torrents; the trees reel and bend their tops, as though about to be severed from their trunks; the lightning darts from cloud to cloud; the thunder follows with its harsh and jarring sound, causing the earth to tremble; all is confusion and disorder; things are changed in their appearance, as though the foundations of the earth and waters were broken up, or creation returning to its pristine chaos. But we must remember that this scene is even beautiful in its time. It soon passeth away, and the rainbow is suspended

in the receding clouds, as an emblem of peace and order. The sun sends his rays—the air is purified and made more salubrious. Hence we perceive, that all things are beautiful in their time, though they may appear against us; and though we may find it difficult to understand the design for which they are intended, yet they are necessary in the workings of the Divine Economy.

CREATION.

Look thou, O man, upon the glorious works of creation, and think from whence they come! We feel the hot rays of the sun, as they descend upon the earth to warm the soil. On the distant hills we see the cattle of the fields grazing. We hear the voices of the birds—each sending forth its melodious sounds—sounds which delight all lovers of nature. We hear the quivering of the leaves. We see the water of the river, passing slowly and majestically along, as if never to return; but every moment particles ascend upwards, to be again spread upon the earth, and again to unite with the water of the river. The face of the whole land looks productive and appears to answer the purpose for which it was designed. Can any thing created by man compare with this? No. All the powers of man united have not created any thing that ever approached near this in point of excellence. The amphitheatres and shows of ancient Rome fell far short of the beauty and magnificence of this limited view of creation. Ask thyself, O man, whose work this is?—and we verily must answer, it is the work of God. But at the present time, some men say there is

no God; and that all these parts of creation are not created, but are the works of chance. If chance has created this earth, why has not chance sent it back again into nonentity, or its pristine chaos? Why has not the land been turned into water, and the water into land? For there would be just as much propriety in this being done, as there would be to say that they were made by chance. Any one would say that it would be impossible for chance to cause this river to turn its course and run up that high hill. Now this would not be as impossible as it would be for chance to create this river and hill, because in the former case, chance had the materials made, but in the latter it has nothing made. It seems to be a law of nature, that a finite thing cannot exist of itself. Even man cannot exist without sustenance from the earth. The leaves of the trees are dependant upon the branches, and the branches upon the body of the tree, and the body upon the roots, and the roots upon the nourishment they gather from the earth. And so it is, if we go through with all the orders of creation. One finite, or inferior thing, is dependant on something less finite and less inferior. Now creation is finite, therefore it must have been created, and is supported by an Almighty and Infinite Creator, who is God. Therefore, if we reason from analogy, we see that finite things cannot exist of themselves, but are dependant upon something infinite. Now all things appertaining to creation are infinite, and if there is no infinite being, creation would go out of existence. Look thou, O man, upon the perfections of creation! See how the rain ascends from the earth, and after it has gathered to a certain quantity, again descends upon the earth, to give moisture to the soil, that man and beast may be supported. See how the earth

revolves upon its axis, once in twenty-four hours, necessarily making day and night; so that man and beast may rest agreeable to their natures. Is all this chance? But, says the infidel, this creation is so constituted, that the different parts of it act upon each other, and by that means causes these things; and therefore does not need the immediate existence of God in order that these things should be. Allowing this to be true, it does not prove the non-existence of God, or that he did not make these things, but rather proves the contrary. It only proves that creation is carried to greater perfection, and therefore increases the proof that creation is the work of an all-wise and infinite Being, instead of mere chance. We will say, for instance, that a man is going to make a machine for the purpose of doing some designed work; he goes on and makes it in such a manner that the different parts act upon each other, and by that means cause it to go on and do what he designed to have it do, without his assistance, after being once put in motion by him. Now this does not prove that he did not make the machine, it only proves that he was a man of wisdom and had the power to do all that was necessary.

Now because creation is made in such a way that the different parts act upon each other, and cause them to do what was designed for them to do, and what would be for the benefit of man, it does not prove that it was not made by God; but on the contrary, proves that it is the work of an infinitely wise, good, and almighty Creator. I feel thankful that I do believe in the existence of a God, whose character is shown and revealed in the Bible, and that my existence is not dependant upon frail chance; but that it is in the hands of God, who is infinite in power, goodness, and mercy.

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